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AS the following PAPERS were publiſhed at Glaſgow, about 12 Years ago, very uncorrectly, on a bad paper and a bad type, and as they are now preſented to the publick in a better dreſs, and contain many excellent advices from a parent to his children, it is hoped there will be no offence taken at their being again reprinted.—They appear to be of general uſe, and writ in ſuch a way as cannot fail of edifying thoſe who will read them with care and attention.

THE Character of the WORTHY GENTLEMAN, who left theſe papers as his laſt will to his children, is well known to many, eſpecially in the South of Scotland, where his eſtate lies:—He is to this day remembred with honour and eſteem, as among the cloud of witneſſes in the years, 1662, 1663, &c. who ſuffered even to the ſpoiling of his goods, knowing that he had in heaven a better and an enduring ſubſtance.—He is now in that happy world, enjoying an eternal reſt, and the accompliſhment of the promiſe, IF WE SHALL SUFFER WITH HIM, WE SHALL ALSO REIGN WITH HIM.

MEMOIRS

OF

WALTER PRINGLE

OF

GREENKNOW.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

THE SECOND EDITION.

EDINBURGH:
Printed for WILLIAM HAMILTON Bookseller.
MDCCLI.

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MEMOIRS, &c.

Some few of the free Mercies of GOD to me, who am moſt unworthy, and my Will to my Children; left to them under mine own Hand.

At GREENKNOW, on SATURDAY AUGUST 2d. 1662, being a private Faſt-day to me.

SECT. I.

SINCE my GOD gave me children, it hath been much upon my mind to record, for their uſe, the wonderful Goodneſs of GOD to me; which I have delayed to do for ſome Years: So that now, unleſs preventing Mercy help, I ſhall not get it ſo performed, as once I might, when the workings of GOD were freſher upon my ſpirit than at this preſent time. Yet I will not limit my HOLY ONE, who can, and, in due time, will ſend the Comforter to bring to my remembrance what is needful; then ſhall I declare the riches of his free Grace to me, the chief of ſinners. However I will labour as the LORD (without whom I can do no good) ſhall give it me, to ſtir up and exhort my children, to flee from the wrath which is coming upon a loſt world, and to lay hold on the offered ſalvation; but knowing mine own weakneſs, I would not offer to do any thing of this kind, were it not to my children:

who I hope will bear with mine infirmities, and, if any thing escape me, will do as Shem and Japheth did to their father. But, if there be any mockers among my children, I trust this shall not come into their hands; that is a cursed child indeed, who dare mock at the words of a father, tho' but minting at truth, especially, when he is dead. For I do not intend, that this shall come unto any of you, until I be gone out of this life: So I hope my words may then have some weight with you. Oh! to have you all to enter in, with your mother and me, to these mansions, which our blessed LORD hath prepared for all them that love him. Will any of you be so mad, as to separate yourselves from that joyful and glorious company? I believe that those of you who die in your childhood shall be saved, through the riches of the free Grace of GOD in JESUS CHRIST. But if any of you perish, being come to age, your destruction will be of yourselves: For you must look to receive according to your faith, and works; by faith we are saved; and where faith is, there will be works also: If any man love our LORD, he will keep his commandments. O how all the truths of GOD are linked together! It is not in the power of enemies to break that chain, though it hath been their endeavour since the beginning, and will be unto the end. "Yet heaven "and earth shall pass away, but one jot, or one "title of the word of GOD shall in no ways fall "to the ground." My children, read the Scriptures diligently, and pray for the Spirit of Truth, that you may understand them: for altho' they are plain and easy unto such as are taught of GOD, tho' they were but babes, yet are they hid from the wise and prudent of this world. Oh! they are not

not happy, whom the world doth esteem to be so: For what is the honour, and what are the riches and pleasures of this world, but as a busked hook, which many times doth draw the poor soul to dreadful destruction? This is the broad way, wherein many are walking; but strive ye to walk in the narrow way, which leadeth unto life: Then shall it be better with you than the tongues of angels and men can express. This truth my soul doth believe: and I leave it unto you subscribed with the hand of your father.

Sic subscribitur, WAL. PRINGLE.

Blessed be my GOD, who hath helped me to begin this work, and who I trust will perfect it.

SECT. II. AUGUST 27. 1662.

SOME have wisdom, and others have learning, which doth help them to bring forth that which may be esteemed of, either for the matter, or for the language: but as for me, I can neither speak nor write sense, if GOD help me not; also I am of a lazy disposition, and cannot pray, nor meditate, nor write, except my HOLY ONE stir me up to it; I have therefore cause to bless him, whenever I am helped to any religious exercise. I will now offer to mention somewhat of the LORD's way with me.

In my childhood, tho' I was much indulged by my parents, and greatly given to playing, yet now and then I had some far off looks towards GOD, beginning to pray unto him: once especially, I remember at the north east-end of Stitchhill-hall (before there were any new building or a garden there)

my heart was, for a short time, very much drawn forth toward GOD, finding fellowship with him sweeter then all things else, which could not be attained without the pardon of sin; so I was led to desire that, and did also beg grace to watch over my heart, that such a frame might not depart from me; and for some time I did watch as carefully over my thoughts and words as ever I did since.

Perhaps I could not, at that time, express these things so distinctly, but sure I am I felt them more lively, and fully, than now I can declare. Blessed for ever be he who looked upon me in my low state. I was often led also to acknowledge GOD, in my childish concernments, such as, the getting of my lesson, or being freed from reproofs; frequently praying to escape correction, when I expected it. It is now my wonder, that I should then have so acknowledged a power above man's, ruling the smallest of his actions, and far more the greatest. When now I believe this, what should trouble or move me? It is my wise and mighty GOD, my gracious and loving FATHER in CHRIST, that ruleth heaven and earth, and all the children of men, and without him a hair of mine head, or of the heads of any of his people, cannot fall to the ground; that which is or shall be, both is, and shall be according to his will: This is my rest, and herewith am I satisfied. Let me, and all his chosen ones, ever be so. What will become of all you, who have no interest in this alone Governour? If you have a shadow of prosperity, it will but last for a moment, and not so much, if it be compared with eternity; for a moment, when it is so compared, is not a moment; and then, when your not a moment is past, what will you do? Oh! they have got a

great

great length, who believe there is such a thing as heaven, and hell, and do sit down to ponder these truths seriously: many say, and imagine, that they believe them, but do it not; for if they did, they would either be under the terror of the one, or joy of the other; yea, the full persuasion thereof would distract those who are under wrath, and ravish the heirs of glory. My children, ponder these things, for, however I utter them, verily of themselves they are most weighty.

SECT. III. SEPTEMBER 6th. 1662.

THUS was I kept under convictions, from (as I remember) the time I was seven or eight years of age, until I was 12, or 13, the love and fear of GOD ruling my heart in some measure; about the end of which time, when I was about 11 years of age, my precious brother went with me to Stirling, where I was a year or two taught by that eminent and pious minister Mr. James Lockie, who at that time could get no entrance into a church, because he would not conform to the bishops. He was removed by death about the time of the covenant. As long as I was his scholar, I did profit very well in learning, for it was pleasant unto me, he had such a good method of teaching; as also he had very much of my heart; but most of all it was his work to instruct us in the ways of GOD, keeping a good order in his family, in which I was, with 13, or 14, others. He used to cause us get many of the psalms by heart, desiring us to repeat them to ourselves, after we went to bed. I remember my rest was never so sweet to me, as when I

had repeated them, and uſed ſome other devotion; I have many times then reſted, as under the ſhadow of the loving-kindneſs of GOD; bleſſed be he for ever, who ſo ſhin'd upon me.

SECT. IV. NOVEMBER 1ſt. 1662.

I WAS not a little ſenſible of the death of that worthy man whom the LORD took up to mount Piſgah, as it were, to ſee the land, (viz. the work of reformation) afar off; after the firſt news whereof, he was taken into his reſt. After that I made no progreſs in learning, neither was I ſo kept in the ways of GOD; tho' ſometimes good thoughts were born in upon me, and I was kept in the love of powerful preaching. Often I have been refreſhed, by hearing Mr. Thomas Wilkie miniſter of Liſlie, whoſe ſcholar I was in the year 1638, who did frequently ſhed tears, while he was preaching; at that time 9 or 10 of us did formally bind ourſelves together, in a bond of brother-hood and love; in which, we alſo engaged ourſelves to the national covenant. I mention theſe things, becauſe I love not to forget, or to break theſe ties which we came under, even when we were but children, ſince the thing in itſelf was lawful, altho' may be, it was raſhly gone about by us at that time. In the year 1639, I was at Leith ſchool: then did youthful luſts and corruptions begin to prevail over me, being ſtronger in me than the grace of GOD. I will not mention my particular abominations; for what GOD hath hid and covered, I will not reveal: only to mine own ſhame, and to his praiſe, who ſpared me, and had mercy upon me, I confeſs that for ten years

years together, I was the chief of sinners; yet was I never without conviction, knowing that I was not then in the way of peace, and life, and that if I should have died in such a case, at that time, damnation would have been my lot. Often in this persuasion have I gone on in hazards, in the wars and otherwise, and thus have I stept about the brink of the bottomless pit, out of which there is no returning for them who once fall into it: but blessed for ever be my GOD, who had then a merciful eye upon me, and thoughts of love unto me. These years of darkness, deadness, and sinfulness, one of them was spent, or rather lost, in Leith, two at Edinburgh college, five at home and in the wars (being a volunteer) and two in France. Seldom all this time, had I the confidence to pray unto GOD, or to worship him? alas! that I should have lived so long without him in the world! O! that I may now be so much the more diligent, in redeeming my time.

SECT. V. NOVEMBER 19th. 1662.

ALL this time of my fearful going astray, I had a love to the godly, and a high esteem of my worthy brother, whose memory is sweet to me. He often spoke edifyingly to me, and sometimes I had freedom to open my case to him: I cannot forget his loving parting with me, when I went to France; where I had not stayed a year, until I was stricken with the news of his decease, which made me go alone in the fields a whole day, having none to share with me in my grief (altho' I had much love of the French, and there were none there but French) for none knew the great loss which I sustained. I then

then thought, that the death of no friend would ever afterwards move me; and in some measure I have found it so; for when any of my friends are removed, ordinarly my first thoughts are, my dear brother is gone: but why should this trouble me? for I shall soon go to him, and (which is most of all) to his GOD, and my GOD; I am sure it is not the worse for me, that he is gone before me, altho' I cannot say, it is to prepare a place for me, blessed for ever be my LORD, who hath taken upon himself that work. O how much doth his love surpass all created love! my GOD, lift up my soul above all creatures unto thyself, that I may love thee, and adore thee; I know this shall be my pleasant work for evermore. Oh! my children taste and see how pleasant a thing it is to know, and enjoy GOD in JESUS CHRIST. I am as one got into a good habitation, and would fain have you with me. Oh! how sweet is the life of a Christian, even while in this world! while I am now in the body, I earnestly desire to persuade you of these truths, for I shall not come back out of heaven, that I may declare unto you the joys which are there for ever: GOD hath not appointed that way, but hath given unto you the words of Moses and the prophets, and the words which our LORD spake when he was in the flesh, and the words of his apostles; and if you will not believe these, "Verily neither will ye believe "though one should rise from the dead." You cannot glorify GOD more, than by believing, and what if I say, that they glorify him most, who upon least ground (to express it so) trust him: "Blessed are "they that have not seen, and yet have believed". For which of these think ye honoureth a king most? he that trusteth his simple word, or he that will have his

his word, oath and writ for it: the thousand part of a word, from the HOLY ONE, who cannot lie, is more sure, than all those from man. But, blessed be GOD, who doth so condescend to our weakness, as not only to give us his word, but his oath also, "That by two immutable things, in which it was "impossible for him to lie, we might have strong "consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold "upon the hope set before us?" O! dear children, hasten, yea hasten to fly from wrath into that hope; lest the other oath pass forth, viz. "Lest he swear "in his wrath, that ye shall not enter into his rest." O depart not from the living GOD! this I exhort you unto, while it is called to day.

SECT. VI. NOVEMBER 24th. 1662.

IN June 1648 I came-home from France, and was much pressed by my loving father to marry; severals were spoken of to me, but I could not incline so much as to go and see any, until the good providence of my GOD led me to see my wife, at her brother in-law Whitebank, his house of Blackhaugh, where I went to stay a night with my old and intimate acquaintance, without the least purpose of seeing her, or any other; and, altho' I had been often in her brother's house, yet had not seen her: neither did I think that he had a daughter for marriage, tho' I loved the family; but I found it otherways, and from this time my affection was to her. But that this was only from the LORD, may appear by the accidentalness of my going there: For I had been in Edinburgh with my father, who, hearing of his brother Newhall's sickness, sent me out

out to see him, and Whitebank came to Newhall to me, and took me home with him that night. Blessed be my GOD, who thus guided me in this, which is of most concernment of any thing within time; yea it may be said, it is of eternal concernment to you our children: for she not only is instant in instructing you in the fear, knowledge, and love of GOD, when you are come to be in any measure capable, (as yourselves are witnesses) but also she putteth up many prayers for you, yea often before you came forth of her belly. Likewise by her holy walking before you, she sheweth forth in her own conversation, that whereunto she doth so much exhort you. What will become of you, if ye slight all this? seeing your mother is speaking to you the words of the kingdom, while she is yet alive with you. And I (after I am gone) by this, still pressing you to come out from a world, and from your natural state, and to enter into, and come thro' the new-birth; without which you cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD. It is true GOD worketh in us both to will and to do; but it is your part to wait at wisdom's gates, and to lay hold on his strength, that you may make peace with him, and to go unto him that you may have life. Blessed be he who willeth not the death of a sinner, but saith unto you, "why will ye die!" hear his voice, and obey it, then shall you live for ever; so be it.

SECT. VII. DECEMBER 1st. 1662.

THIS mine affection I kept secret within mine own breast, fearing that my father, because of the smalness of the portion, would not give his consent,

consent, without which I was resolved never to marry: But at last my father, finding me averse from any he mentioned to me, began to suspect, that my mind was that way; and when he posed me upon it, I confessed it unto him: and so great was his tenderness unto me, that he consented and gave me way to propose it, which I did to herself and her friends, having never spoken of it to them before, and appointed a meeting with them at Edinburgh for that effect, for which and other business my father went in; but the next day, before he had met with any of her friends, he was seized upon by sickness; and, within 14 days in the beginning of May 1649, he was very peaceably removed from a troublesome world, I trust into life eternal. Thus I was left, being 24 years of age, and having little experience in the affairs of the world, with the oversight of eight of my dear brother's children, and a sister's son: my care was to discharge a faithful duty to them, tho' the last of these hath other thoughts at this time, and is prejudg'd against me: I beg forgiveness to him, from GOD, who is my witness that I never wronged him in a farthing, to my knowledge; yea, I had rather quite all that I have in the world, then bear such a sting in my conscience, and defile my soul with that which is evil. Blessed be my GOD, I'm free from any such thing: Some there are, who know the truth of my innocency, and that a just accompt was given of his estate. The profession I have walked in these 14 years obligeth me to say this much, as also the desire I have, that you my children should live righteously in this present world, maketh me clear up to you, what may seem to be otherwise in myself; yea, my study is,

to have always a "conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." And dear children, what will it profit any of you, tho' you could "gain the whole world, if you lose your own souls?" O! but a holy and upright walk with God and men, will bring you unexpressible peace of mind, which will be unto you a continual feast. This is that which maketh a man bold as a lion; for when the world doth challenge, and condemn, God doth absolve. And what if our righteousness should not, as it will in a great measure, be cleared up, until the great day of judgment come? may we not rest satisfied till then? Oh, my children so live, as with joy of heart, you may wait for, and expect that day; and never judge it well with you, until you win to such a frame; for every good and faithful servant joyfully waiteth for his master's coming. Ponder these things.

SECT. VIII. December 2d. 1662.

I Must mention here, that immediately after I had written what is above said, in our family exercise, yesterday morning, the first word read by my worthy friend, the messenger of the Lord, Mr. Luke Ogle, who is here for the time, was Isa. xxvi. 7. "The way of the just is uprightness: Thou most "upright, dost weigh the path of the just;" And is not this most suitable to that, which I have been saying, by way of vindication? Five months past, after my father's decease, e're I proceeded in my marriage; in which time, I had good days at a communion in Lauder, which was the last which that precious servant of God Mr. James Guthrie, whom

I may call my father in the gospel, if any man may be so called, had in that place. And altho my wife now was there at that time, yet I remember, I had scarce one thought of her all these three days, tho' I had very much of that which is called love. After that time I was led into a more close way of walking with my GOD than formerly. Sometime seeing Mr. Guthrie, to whom I made known my purpose of marriage, asking his advice, he desired to understand if I knew any thing of a work of grace in her heart, which he said was most necessary, and that her having a good woman to her mother was not enough to me: But I was engaged before this, and have nothing to ascribe to mine own prudence or foresight, but very much, yea more than can be expressed, to the goodness of my GOD, who not only gave me a good wife, but also made it appear to me that she was so before our marriage; for, after we were contracted, by a wonderful passage of his providence, casting her unto sickness, which she herself, and we also thought might have proved deadly, she then spake freely of her soul's concernments; whereby the LORD's working upon her spirit did fully appear to me, and my scruple I had was then removed. When I remember this, I must glorify the name of my GOD; praise be to him for evermore. My children, I advise you, when you read what I write in this book, to read no more than one days writing at one time, which you see is but very little: For I desire to be very serious in this that I do, and intreat, that you may be so in reading. I commit all unto GOD, who can work upon you by means, and without means.

SECT. IX. December 22d. 1662.

IN November 1649 we were married at Stow, by that renowned Mr. James Guthrie. My wife remained in Torwoodlie about six months, and thereafter came home to Stitchill, where we stayed five years with my mother; and with us, there were five of my brother's children (for Elizabeth stay'd always with her mother, and the two youngest sons were removed by death) my sister's son, and my dear friend Mr. James Aird. During this time, we had a very loving, sweet, and peaceable society: My wife did grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God, of which she is more able to give an account than I am. If before that time she was last, yet I'm sure since she is first, and far more able to declare the wonderful riches of the goodness of God than I am: yet it is not my part to be silent in this matter; for blessed be he, who is ever willing and ready to let forth abundantly unto me: But oh! my narrowness and slackness in receiving from him. Yet I shall glory in mine infirmities, if he be exalted, who was, is, and shall be for ever glorious in himself, and nothing else is so; for all the creatures are more or less glorious, according as they enjoy of, and give glory unto him. The angels and saints in glory delight in nothing more, than in declaring that all they have is from him: His infinite wisdom, power and goodness brought them and us, who are here below, out of nothing, that we may for ever be happy in him. O for an enlarged heart to praise him! Should I not bless mine own lips, when they are opened to shew forth his praises, and the hand which doth write them down? O that I may never love

love myself, but that he may be exalted in me, and by me, that is to love him only! O sweet ravishment, to be ravished with his love! My children, I assure you, that other lovers will not, neither can satisfy you; for they are vain and finite: But begin ye sincerely to love GOD, and upon my life [this great word I express, to hold forth the certainty of this truth] the more you love him, the more you shall desire to love and enjoy him: Then shall you set to your seal, that GOD is true, and that his word is so also: Then shall you say, "Now we believe, not because "of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, "and know that this is CHRIST the SAVIOUR of "the world."

SECT. X. DECEMBER 25th. 1662.

UNTIL the English army came into Scotland, I was much taken up with suits of law for my pupils, being always a defender; but now and then I had sweet moments, even while I was attending at great mens doors. It was no small affliction to me, that I got so seldom stayed at home, where I had so much ground of outward contentment, and inward advantage to my own spirit, but this I endeavoured to bear as my cross. When the English came in, I went to our army, and had my mother, my wife, and the children in Edinburgh, until we were defeat at Dunbar, after which I brought them home to Stitchill; and my wife being big with child, I stayed with her until she was delivered of our daughter Katharine, upon the 10th day of November 1650. The next day a party of the English came in, and took up all this country; where-

upon I went and ſtayed eight days in and about Torwoodlie; then being accompanied with my brother Torwoodlie, I came in the night time to ſee my wife; and as we were returning back, it was my lot to rencounter one of the Engliſh upon horſeback, whom I killed, knowing that I could not get a priſoner carried to our army, for we had difficulty to get to it ourſelves. And that which cleared me the more in this was, that he never aſked quarters: But what of raſhneſs was herein, I believe aſſuredly, that the LORD my GOD hath pardoned it; and that it is done away in and thro' JESUS CHRIST my SAVIOUR, who hath ſaved me from many grievous tranſgreſſions and ſins, which cannot be numbred, to whom I deſire daily to run, as unto a ſpring of living waters, "A fountain "opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs," and one who hath "the words of eternal life:" In him I deſire always "to be found, not having mine own righte-"ouſneſs, but that which is by faith in him:" This is that new and living way. "Bleſſed for "ever be the Father of my LORD JESUS CHRIST," who drew me into him, and will now "guide me "by his counſel, and afterwards receive me into "glory." The building of the temple was denyed to David, becauſe he had been a man of war, and had ſhed blood; it is good to be tender of the lives of the ſmalleſt living creatures, but much more of man's life, not thruſting out the immortal ſoul, which returneth not again within time; for the beſt of men may ſay, "Spare me a little, that I may "recover ſtrength, before I go hence, and be no "more." Theſe and other conſiderations move me to adviſe you, my ſons, to embrace any other lawful employment, rather than to be ſoldiers: But

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I will not wholly lay this bond upon you, since I don't esteem it to be unlawful; for if it had been so, our blessed LORD's forerunner, John the Baptist, would have said more to these soldiers, who enquired at him what they should do, than command them to be content with their wages, &c. In our time we have seen pious men in that employment; and I believe, that there is a time coming, wherein "Holiness shall be written upon the "horses bridles;" and far more shall it be written upon the riders. Only, my sons, if ever, in any part of the world, you engage in this employment, be sure you have on your side, the LORD GOD of HOSTS, that whether you live or die, it may be unto him.

SECT. XI. DECEMBER 31st 1662.

THIS preceeding account is one of the most considerable passages of my life, and upon it dependeth much of my Christian walk, as may afterwards appear; and therefore I have mentioned it. After this, I spake with my worthy friend Col. Gilbert Ker, at Glasgow, to whom I proposed to return, when once I had been at St. Johnston. At Stirling I advised with my dear friend Mr. James Guthrie, anent mine own and my brother's children (to whom that faithful man had ever a most tender respect) their concernments, then I went to St. Johnston, where I had not stayed eight days, until the news came of the total defeat of Colonel Ker's forces at Hamilton. I remained at St. Johnston till the castle of Edinburgh was to be rendered to

the Engliſh; and my own and my pupils writs being there, I took occaſion to come over to Edinburgh, upon our chancellor's paſs, and from thence I came home to Stitchill, where I was not many days, till the Engliſh got knowledge of me, and of that which I had done; whereof, and of their purpoſe to apprehend me, I was advertiſed, tho' I had not the leaſt inclination to go from home, yet being preſſed by my friends, I went to Northumberland, and ſtayed ſome few days in my couſin Major Pringle's houſe; after which, I returned home, and expected every day to have been taken, if not worſe; for I was informed that the man who was killed had friends, who made many vows to be avenged: but nothing could move me in the frame of ſpirit wherein I was, yea, many a time I then thought, that I could as willingly have opened the buttons of my breaſt, to receive death's ſtroke, as ever I did to go to bed. At length a party of horſe came and took me, and kept me priſoner that night at Dornick; where (I will never forget) it wa my ordinary to read the 100 pſalm, which I did with very much joy and peace, altho', as to the outward, it was the darkeſt hour of trouble I have had in my life: I was alone with them all that night, for theſe of the houſe I knew not. The next morning my mother in law came to ſee me; and that day I was carried to Selkirk, and examined by Major Robertſon, of whoſe regiment the man had been: I denied nothing, but pleaded, that I was a ſoldier ſtanding upon defence of my country from the invaſion. Afterwards I was let go, upon my father in law and Whitebank their bond of 2000 l. ſterling penalty, that I ſhould compear again.

All

All this time, my true friend, Mr. James Aird, was moſt diligent and careful, in ſoliciting the chief officers at Edinburgh for me, and rode many miles for that buſineſs; which love of his I and mine ſhould ever remember, and therefore I thus mention it; he did what was done, yet little aſſurance could be had from men, of my life; for when I went ſecretly to Edinburgh and laid the buſineſs, as it ſtood, before my worthy Lord Wariſton, he adviſed me not to compear, and ſo did others; but I could never agree to that, but gave up my ſelf into the hands of my GOD, without whom I knew a hair of my head could not fall, and who ruled over them who ſought my life. The reſt of this I muſt leave till the next occaſion, which may be to-morrow, if GOD give it, and ſpare me; unto his holy will I ever deſire to ſubmit.

SECT. XII. JANUARY 1ſt 1663.

AT laſt, the chief officers were content to refer the matter to the captain of whoſe troop the man had been, to whom my mother very ſpeedily pay'd 150 l. ſterling, for the uſe of the man's friends, as they pretended. In all this, I was wholly paſſive; for all was done by Mr. Aird; only my mother pay'd the money at Torwoodlie, where the captain had his quarters. I had never a ſweeter time in my life than this was, being fully aſſured, that whatever way it went, it ſhould be well, for I ſought nothing, but to have GOD to be my GOD: And bleſſed for ever be he, who gave himſelf to me, and gave me full ſubmiſſion to his will: yet I was not without ſome ſubmiſſive deſires, that

that he would free me out of that trouble; for I thought if I ſhould come to loſe my life, it would not be a clear ſuffering for the name of JESUS CHRIST, eſpecially ſeeing ſome made it then their trade, to kill them for their purſes; but that was not my caſe, for I would touch nothing of his but his arms, O! what a happineſs I thought it was for one to lay down their life for CHRIST. Theſe conſiderations mov'd me to think, that if GOD would deliver me and lengthen my days, I ſhould be wholly his, and at his diſpoſal: Many a time have I vowed ſo to be, both then and ſince; and here I do renew my vows, ſetting it down under my hand, That GOD (without whom I can perform nothing) ſtrengthning me, I ſhall forſake houſes, lands, poſſeſſions, country, friends, wife, children, life, and all for him, to whom oftner than once or twice I have given all that ſeemeth to be mine, which now I profeſs I enjoy as lent by him to me, whoſe voice I hear ſay to me, "occupy "till I come." LORD and Maſter help me ſo to do. And now not only theſe outward things do I give unto thee my GOD, but, which is far more than all theſe, even the eternal life of my ſoul, as a token of my love to thee, and I truſt in thee, who will make all to work together for my good, both here and hereafter. So that, in this my reſigning up of my life unto thee, I ſhall be no loſer; for it is to one that will keep it better than I can; but I will not ſpend my care upon that only: I pray, Father, keep me from ſinning againſt thee, and keep me in thy love always; and when I think that I ſtand, help me to take heed leſt I fall, and help me always to mind the good of thy people, praying for the peace of thy Jeruſalem. My children,

children, whom for a while I've forgotten, oh! ſtrive to enter within the walls of this Jeruſalem; for peace ſhall only be there, and proſperity within her palaces.

SECT. XIII. JANUARY 31ſt. 1663.

IN the year 1651 I became a conſtant hearer of that lively man Mr. John Livingſtone, going every ſabbath-day from Stitchill to Ancrum. By the way I have had many a ſweet hour, and I ever heard him with great delight and profit to my ſoul, always eſteeming the word ſpoken by him not to be his, but GOD's. Beyond any that ever I knew, he hath brought his wiſdom, learning and parts (whereof he hath a very large ſhare) moſt in ſubjection to GOD; So that not by theſe, but by the movings of the ſpirit of truth, did he ſpeak out of the abundance that was in his heart; therefore, thro' the goodneſs of GOD, his words did reach into the hearts of others; but, in a word, he hath ſeen the glory of GOD, and doth ſpeak what he hath ſeen and heard. I am a debitor more than I can expreſs to this worthy man; for, beſide the hearing of him preach, I have had ſweet fellowſhip with him, ever delighting in his company: and once when I was lying in one bed with him at Eglingham, about the middle of the Night, I awaked with moſt ſweet breathings upon my ſpirit, which cauſed me to ſhed tears with much joy, upon my pillow: this I revealed not to him, and here I mention it without any obſervation, leſt I ſhould ſeem to be poſitive in that which is not yet underſtood. Now this precious man is baniſhed out of theſe lands by the lords of council;

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as a child from a father did I part with him at Leith, upon the 14th day of this present month: Yet nothing of this doth trouble me, but the fear I have of what the LORD GOD may be minding, by banishing such shining lights out of the land: If it be his will to remove his glory out of this, and our neighbouring lands, that he may plant it among some others of the nations of the earth, I willingly submit to his SOVEREIGNTY; only I pray, that my poor children, and the children of the faithful in thir lands, whom I'm bound to remember, may be taken away to reside in the place where the name of our GOD shall be. And if it be his holy will, that our carcases should fall in the wilderness, we not seeing any more of these good days which we have seen, nor of the glorious days which are coming, so be it. Yet, oh! LORD GOD cause the posterity enter in, and let them not be rebellious as we have been. Yet do I not know how soon his wonderful mercies may prevent us: Oh to believe! we should then see all things to be possible, O! for a spirit of prayer to be poured out upon his people in these lands, that we may take hold of him; Not letting him depart, for there is room enough (so to speak) in our Father's house, for these and other nations of the earth also.

SECT. XIV. FEBRUARY 28th. 1663.

I CAME from Stitchill, to remain at Greenknow, in March 1655. After which I was no more a constant hearer of Mr. John Livingstone, being taken up with worldly business through the week, my desire was to rest on the sabbath, that is, to bring

bring in my mind from off all things elſe, to think on my GOD, ſo ſtriving to be ſtill, "that I might "know that he alone is GOD," Pſal. xlvi. 10. which once was a rich place to me, and whereupon I have often fed; for theſe ſeveral years paſt, I had never any doubt, which did not preſently evaniſh, when once I believed that truth of all truths, that GOD is; then did I believe the whole truths that are contained in the Scriptures, and then was I quickned and ſtrengthned for every duty; but often in one day would this truth be with me, and from me: not that ever I fell into that height of atheiſm, as fully to deny GOD, but often have I wanted the preſent full perſuaſion of his Being, whereof I have been more fully aſſured, than of mine own, and that not becauſe I have been brought up with the hearing others ſay ſo, but, bleſſed for ever be he, who hath often made every pyle of graſs, and every moving creature, yea, whatever I did ſee with my eye, or touch with my hand, to preach forth unto me his infinite Power, Wiſdom, Goodneſs and Glory. My ſoul rejoiceth in the faith, and full aſſurance of this, that HE IS and that he is a "re- "warder of all them that diligently ſeek him." Oh! my dear children, ſtrive to be of that happy and bleſſed number, whoſe reward is not yet known; "for now are we the ſons of GOD, but it doth not "yet appear what we ſhall be." Take GOD for your guide, and he will lead you ſafely into his glory. Others may point at the way; but who can carry a ſoul through the many difficulties of this life, and far leſs through the valley and ſhadow of death, but GOD alone; who can clear up every doubt, turning darkneſs into light, weakneſs into ſtrength, and death unto life, giving a being unto things which

are

are not? My children, know him, adore him, and believe in him, that ye may have it to say, "Now "we believe," not because of our father, and others their sayings, but having "heard him, ourselves," we know indeed that he is the "SAVIOUR "of the world." Need you not this salvation? If you can say, that you are happy without GOD, then do not seek after him: but Oh! none can have such a fearful thought in their heart, and the conscience, which is GOD's witness, not accusing them of their abominable lying. And now, seeing there is no happiness, true joy, nor peace, but in GOD, arise and seek it in him thro' JESUS CHRIST, forsaking all other lords, and masters, for you cannot serve two.

SECT. XV. MARCH 16th. 1663.

BLESSED be my GOD, who upon Tuesday last gave unto me another child, to whom I may leave some words in record; seeing I know not if I shall live till he come to understanding, altho' I may say, that prayers were put up for thee, before thou cam'st into this world, yet I will mention what was done at the time of thy coming into it. I was in the inner garden, praying to my GOD, in the time of my wife's travelling, when the news of thy birth came unto me, and before I came up to see my wife, or had seen thy face, I bow'd down upon my knees to worship, and give thanks unto GOD, to whom I gave thee fully up in a solemn manner, praying that thou mightst be wholly his, and that he might care for thee; for, what is my care, or the care of the wisest, or greatest of men, with-

without GOD's blessing? This I did at the plumb tree, on the north side of the garden door: I mention the place, that, if thou come to years, it may put thee in mind, after I am gone, of that which was done for thee in the first moment of thy coming into the world. It will be a terrible thing for thee, when thou com'st to have knowledge of good and evil, to deny or to neglect to give thyself unto GOD, contradicting, by thy words or deeds, what I have done, and so striving to recal my word, which thou can'st not recal: For if thou receive not the truth, it shall be a witness against thee in the day of judgment, and shall add to thy condemnation; yea, and mine eye shall not pity thee, tho' now thou art near my heart, as also are all the rest of my children. But I hope for better things of thee, and that, if thou come to age, thou wilt heartily consent to that which thy father hath promised, and will seal it with thy holy life; and then may'st thou lay hold on this for thine encouragement, when thou dost serve the GOD of thy father. O! a rich reward shall be given unto thee, and more than heaven and earth shall be thy portion. With all thy might and speed seek for life eternal: for so soon as thou didst enter into this life, thou cried'st, mortality. And yesterday, being the day whereon thou wast received into the visible church, and baptized, our faithful minister, Mr. John Hardie preached upon these words, Psal. cii. 23. "He shortned my days;" which was very pertinent doctrine for a young pilgrim; for thy name Walter, is high Dutch, and doth signify, pilgrim or wood-man: Oh! that thou and I may live as pilgrims in this earth, abstaining from fleshly lusts and pleasures, and travelling towards a city which hath foundations. Since I understood the

meaning of my own name, it hath been of some use to me, I pray that it may be so also to thee.

SECT. XVI. May 29th. 1663.

IT comes to my remembrance, to mention a passage, concerning my eldest son Robert, how that upon Saturday the 23d of April, 1653, being the day whereon I came home to Stitchill from London, I heard at Wooller, that he was dangerously sick, and, as was thought, could not be living till I got home. And when I came, I found him at the very point of death; upon which I went alone to pray for thee my son, who was then about sixteen months old, and got very much assurance, that it should be well with thy soul if thou should'st be removed, and did fully submit to the will of my God, giving thee freely up unto him, yea desiring, that my gracious God would rather be pleased to take thee, then in thy innocent days, unto himself, than to continue thee to live in the world a stranger and enemy to him. These thoughts were then more upon my spirit, than now I can express them. Only, my dear son, with thy whole might seek grace from God, that thou may'st fulfil the desires of thy father, in living unto God; in so doing alone thou shalt be happy. I know not if I can leave thee what I presently possess of the things of this world, altho' I think I shall rather add to them, than take from them; yet I know not but God, who gave them unto me, may take them from me, or call me to forsake them for his truth's sake, as some in these days are call'd, and honour'd to do. Wilt thou be offended at me, if I quite the things of this life, which

which lasteth but for a moment, for that life in glory which shall have no end. Oh! my son, be thou so far from condemning me, if I receive grace to make this wise choice, as to make it thyself: then shalt thou be a wise merchant, when, with the sale of all, thou buyest that inestimable jewel, the favour and peace of GOD; then shalt thou find that there is, "a hundred fold even in this life (with persecution) and life eternal:" O! who knoweth the worth, or glory of that life? have any come back to tell us what these mansions are? or if they had, would we hear or understand their relation? it is our best to believe, that "now we are the sons of "GOD; and that it doth not yet appear what we "shall be."

DEAR son, think on these things, until thy heart be ravished with love to GOD, who sent his Son JESUS CHRIST to purchase this GREAT SALVATION. What I say to one, I say to all of you, "Love "GOD, keep his commandments," which are not grievous. Thus have I spent this morning, and (GOD assisting me) shall not spend the afternoon in conforming to the world, in ranting, and rioting, and drunkenness. GOD pardon this perverse generation, and warn them to flee from the wrath to come.

SECT. XVII. AUGUST 11th. 1663.

WHEN first I came to dwell here, it was much upon my spirit, to intreat my GOD, who doth appoint the bounds of every one's habitation, as Acts xvii. 26. graciously to shine upon us in this house, and (as then I was led to mention in a letter to my worthy brother Whitebank) that as the

name of this place is GREEN, so he might pray the LORD to make it green and flourishing. Many a prayer was put up to GOD in this house, before I came here; and O! that the name of GOD may be made mention of in truth here when I'm gone, yea, as long as sun and moon endureth: This is a great request for me to ask, but it is a small thing for my GOD to give, for he is a GREAT KING.

WHEN I came hither, I did more than before, I look upon this as mine own family, having from GOD received the charge of it, with my wife, who, in the service of GOD, is truly a helper unto me; for the family worship hath been often better performed by her in my absence, than by me when present; only it was much upon my heart, that we should all live together in the love and fear of GOD, strengthning and helping to build up one another.

I COULD then have wished never to change one servant: but when I found that could not be, I was led to think and hope there might be a good providence in often changing (I being passive) seeing, that thereby many might hear, and some of these might get a word cast in; which, though it should ly long hid, as seed under the ground, yet, thro' the Goodness of GOD, might spring up before the hour of their death. However his word never returneth empty, for it is either the savour of life or death, in both which GOD is glorified; and seeing it is so, his under-labourers should rest abundantly satisfied, when in sincerity they have done his work: But, Oh! heartily do I desire to find in heaven monuments, thro' the riches of GOD's free grace, and infinite power, of my poor weak endeavours in the family, or in this, which I leave to you my children. I should think myself far, yea far more happy,

happy, if I can be an inſtrument of gaining one poor ſoul unto GOD, than if I ſhould conquer the whole earth; for a man's happineſs doth not conſiſt in theſe things, which do laſt but for a time, and do often wear out before time be at an end: for where are theſe monuments, ſtatues, and pillars of braſs, and marble, which great men of old rear'd up for a memory of their names? And tho' theſe were all ſtanding, and their memories, which they ſo much eſteemed, were yet freſh in this world, what could all that profit theſe famous mighty men, if their ſouls be not in heaven? there are laſting and during things, which time cannot wear away, yea time cometh not there. My dear children, O that you and I may ſo obey GOD, while we are here in time, as that he may, of his free mercy, receive us into that bleſſed habitation with himſelf for ever!

SECT. XVIII. AUGUST 24th. 1663.

BECAUSE of that which is ſaid in the 9th and 10th pages, I will here mention, that upon Wedneſday laſt my ſiſter's ſon Graden, came hither, and acknowledged, that he had been in the wrong to me, in alledging my miſmanagement of his affairs, and in obedience to my Lord's command, I was ready very freely and heartily to forgive him, which I ſhall teſtify, when ever I can be ſerviceable to him. Bleſſed be my GOD, who hath cleared up mine innocency, in this which I ſet down here, only to vindicate the profeſſion of religion I am under; if again he ſhould change, it will have no weight, but will be imputed to his inconſtancy. The men of

this world esteem their good name very dear to them; but how much more should Christians, whose smallest misbehaviours get the name of GOD blasphemed? but by whose good works the name of their heavenly Father is glorified? Some princes servants will hazard their lives, and all that they have, for the credit of their worm-master: Oh! how much more should we, the servants of the Almighty, and infinitely glorious GOD? which if we sufficiently knew, we would cry out, Who is sufficient for these things; and would certainly take good heed to our goings always, striving "to keep "our consciences void of offence toward GOD, "and toward man." For if one poor soul minting after GOD shall leave off its duty, falling upon the stumbling block of a Christian's offence, it had been better for that Christian to have been casten into the depth of the sea. As he is happy who is instrumental in converting a soul unto GOD, how miserable is he, who turneth away a soul? my GOD, pardon wherein ever I have offended any of the generation of the just, or have given just cause to others to speak against the way of truth, and help me in time to come, to watch and be sober. And O LORD wipe away the offences of thy people, which have too much abounded, in these days, thro' their covetous and selfish ends, and want of love one to another; and for thy name's sake, bring them out of the furnace (for they are now in it) as gold purified; and fit and prepare a people for thy self in the earth, that thy will may be done here, as in heaven, and that it may appear unto the children of men, that thou hast not forsaken the earth, but hast yet many gracious promises to accomplish, and more glorious appearances to shew forth, than we

or

or our fathers have yet seen. O that I and my children may be of the number of those who wait for thy salvation, and, thro' thy mercy and power, may be able to discern thy coming, and may draw in to thee our blessed LORD, as the eagles are by natural instinct led from far to their food! for many, who think that they are friends to thy truths, will be found resisters of that power wherein thou wilt come, and thy glorious appearance shall so dazle the sight of many, that their shew of light shall be turned into darkness. There was never a people more called to watchfulness, than in these latter days are: "The Spirit and the Bride have been saying "come," Oh! to have oil in our lamps; for our blessed LORD will now soon come. "Let him that "heareth, and him that is athirst say, come;" and let my soul always say, "Even so come LORD "JESUS."

SECT. XIX. SEPTEMBER 3d. 1663.

I AM very desirous to hasten thro' what is past; therefore I only incline to mention shortly mine imprisonment in the castle of Edinburgh, upon the 26th of September 1660, with Sir Andrew Ker of Green-head, with whom I had very sweet fellowship for 15 days, which was the time we were in prison, and one of the sweetest times I have yet had; for both of us were led forth to rejoice in the cross of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and were most willing, through his grace and strength, to forsake all for him; the LORD our GOD keep us ever in the same mind. Since that time of our coming out of prison, I have had very much outward peace and quietness.

quietneſs, having no trouble upon me, or my family, except only the afflictions of the people of GOD, with whom I ever deſire to ſympathize, ſorrowing with thoſe of them that ſorrow, and being in bonds with them which are bound. My plenty is often a burden to me, when I remember their wants; and now I know not what this peace and plenty may mean, unleſs that I ſhould be laying up in ſtore grace to help me in the time of my need, when my trial cometh, and when the waters ſhall riſe and ſwell againſt me: O that then I may ſtand faſt in the LORD, and may evermore, even to the end! for the crown is only to ſuch; and they are not worthy to be his diſciples, who will not endure all, deny all for him. Now, I know not what is before me, nor what this or any one day may bring forth; neither deſire I to know, but to truſt all to the infinite Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of my GOD, who hitherto hath helped me, and who, I hope, will never leave me to my fooliſh wiſdom, and weak ſtrength. O to know mine inſufficiency, that I may the more know the All-ſufficiency of my GOD! Bleſſed be my GOD, whoſe promiſe I have, that he will guide me by his counſel, while I am here; if this were not, I would cry out, O carry me not hence? but ſeeing thou art with me, tho' I be but a worm, yet I will not fear, but will go on confidently, though I know not whither. O what a dangerous journey are the wiſeſt of the children of men going, who have not GOD for their guide! they may tremble every moment, and if they fully knew their own condition, they would be as in the torments of hell, until they had an intereſt in GOD. O how is this blind world ruſhing on to their own ruin! My dear children, haſten, haſten, haſten to leave them, and their way, which leadeth

to

to death, and look not behind you; "Remember "Lot's wife:" yea, look not to the beſt of men in all their actions, for theſe are not perfect patterns, but have GOD always before you, ſtriving to do that which is right in his ſight, and putting your truſt in him only: and then when he calleth, you may walk on the waters, and not be afraid, and you may go into a den of lions, or to a burning furnace; yea, you may go thro' death and judgment, and not be affrighted. If theſe things were believed, what would we not do, or ſuffer, in our journey? and if we knew him, who is the LORD of Glory, what would we not undergo, for his bleſſed Name's ſake? Oh! my children, ſeek a diſcovery of him in mercy, and follow on to know him: then ſhall ye be happy, and ſhall with delight confeſs, that ſuch a knowledge of him is too wonderful for you, and that you cannot fully attain unto it, for he is INFINITE. O that you may all be his redeemed ones! On the laſt Sabbath at Weſtruther, it was joy to my ſoul to ſee one of you, I mean my daughter Katharine, ſit down at the table of the LORD deſirous to eat, and to drink in remembrance of him: The LORD GOD bring theſe deſires in thee on to a perfect flame of love to him; and grant, that as thou art entered into the communion of ſaints here, ſo thou may'ſt be with them in heaven for ever and ever!

SECT. XX. OCTOBER 5th 1663.

MY children, ſince the laſt day I wrote here, you have an aunt gone to heaven, the Lady Haining, who paſt from this world, on the 28th of

of September last. Many of your kindred, (I trust) are walking in the way which leadeth to glory; I know none of your uncles or aunts of your mother's side and mine, who have come to age, and have not broken off the way of the world, which leadeth to perdition: yea, all of them are or have been professors of truth and holiness; I say have been, for some of them, who shined in their generation, are now in perfection shining before their and our GOD. O that we may run after them, that are gone into glory before us, with all our might! for the wrath which we flee from is terrible, and the prize which is set before us, is great and glorious, and lasteth for ever. Blessed for ever be my GOD, who of his rich free Grace, hath so shin'd upon the families of Torwoodlie and Stitchill. O that you who come after may taste of the same goodness: "You are compassed about with a great "cloud of witnesses," as these which are mentioned, Heb. xi. and throughout the Scriptures, and all these martyrs and saints which have lived since. "O let us lay aside every weight and sin, and run "with patience the race which is set before us; "looking" (which is the best look) "unto JESUS, "the author and finisher of our faith." We may exceed in our thoughts of angels, or saints, as the man did, who offer'd to worship the angel; but we can never think enough of GOD; for who can reach the end of infinite glory? O! when we have wearied ourselves with adoring him, then let us begin to adore, and worship him: and when strength faileth us, let us pray, that he may renew our strength. O happy are they who constantly move in this circle? My children, when you have once tasted and known the sweetness of this way, you will never

never desire to move one step out of it, unless ignorance come in the place of your knowledge; therefore "work out your own salvation with fear and "trembling; and let the joy of the LORD be your "strength." This circle is not a prison, but perfect liberty, all who move not in this way of serving GOD, and adoring him, are and shall be shut up in utter darkness: but they that walk in this circle, tho' they were shut up, and bound with chains, and their feet fast in stocks, yet are they in a large place. The mind and soul enemies cannot shut up in prison. My children, I may lay out many motives before you to perswade you to walk in the way of life; but you will find all these to be but small, when once you get a broad look of GOD himself. It is not angels, or saints, or created glory, that is our heaven; but GOD alone is our HEAVEN, our HAPPINESS, and our ALL. When, at any time, our souls are raised up to think on what's above, where BLESSED HE is; let us again come down with delight, to do his will here in the world, patiently waiting for his good pleasure, without which nothing can befal us. O then! why should we be moved, to fear what can come? O to be freed from sin! I have now no more time to write.

SECT. XXI. DECEMBER 3d 1663.

UPON Saturday gone eight days, my children, another of your aunts passed away from this life; viz. my sister Craigie; she expressed unto me her assurance of mercy and salvation, thro' JESUS CHRIST; so that we have one friend more in heaven. I am not troubled at the death of my relations

relations that die in the LORD; yea, I esteem it more worthy to me, to have them in heaven, than in this world; for that is the place, where we should "lay up treasures for our selves, where moth and "rust do not enter:" But when we think of our treasures in heaven, we should again think, "whom "have we there, but GOD; or whom should we "desire on earth beside him?" He that said this, found no need of saints in heaven to intercede for him. "We have an advocate with the FATHER, "JESUS CHRIST the Righteous," who telleth believers that the FATHER himself loveth them, from whom we may ask in his name; and to assure us the more, he saith, "And I say unto you, that I "will pray the FATHER for you." They know not the FATHER's love and jealousy, who make use of the intercession of angels, or saints. My children, seek GOD in earnest, and you shall know this, and all needful truths. O how necessary is this knowledge in these days! when many are saying, Lo here is CHRIST, and lo there: be the more diligent, and fear, because "strait is the way "which leadeth unto life, and few there be that "find it." Yet such a way it is, as that the wayfaring ones, tho' fools, err not in it: for sure is the covenant, which is made with believers; that they have the word and OATH OF HIM, who is truth itself. Rest not until you get this to lean unto. Oh! I cannot be so useful unto you, my dear children, as to press you to this, and when my GOD doth help me so to do, either by this mean, or by praying for you, then have I a good measure of peace in mine own mind. This maketh me think assuredly, that GOD doth allow me in this small work, of leaving this under mine hand

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unto you; for when I have done any part of it, tho' never so weakly, yet I have joy and rest in my heart; which is the more heightned, when I win to hope, that all or some of you, may come to profit by it. Another encouragement to this way is, when I think how many precious ones, upon their death-beds, get few or no words spoken to their children, or to those about them, for pain and other hindrances. So that it is good to work, "while it is to-day, for the night cometh, wherein "none can work;" Yea, that night may come before we go out of this world, sometimes by distempers upon our bodies, or spirits. Thus desire I to make ready, for what the will, the good will of my GOD shall be towards me; that when the hour of death cometh, I may have nothing to do but die. I desire to lay very little stress upon that last moment: how ignorant was that man, who desired to die the death of the righteous? my children, live this holy life, and you shall assuredly be led thro' the valley and shadow of death.

SECT. XXII. DECEMBER 25th 1663.

SINCE what I last said, I met with another encouragement to this duty of writing to you, my children, viz. An honest friend shewed me a very christian letter written by her husband, now deceas'd, to her, which she doth intend to keep for their son, and only child, who is not as yet three months old, thinking that he may lay to heart the father's words, whom he did never see in the face: and how much more, my children, should you mind what I say, seeing it is expressly to you, that I am

led, I trust by the Spirit of my GOD, to write, tho' in great weakness upon my part. But blessed be my GOD, who perfecteth strength in weakness; so that, in a manner, it is all one, whether a man be weak or strong in himself, seeing GOD can, and often doth make the weak words of a weak man, to be more powerful than those of the wise and prudent, tho' honest as well as the other; for GOD, who freely giveth, doth bestow the blessing according to the measure of faith. That is our LORD's commendation, "O woman, great is thy "faith;" and the answer is, "Be it unto thee "even as thou wilt." But strong Peter, when he began to doubt, began to sink. The promise is, "That whatsoever we ask believing, we shall receive "it." And now, O that my faith were increased not only for my self and for the work and people of GOD (which is now low in mens account) but also for you my children! that I were oftner praying, and believing for you! It is true, you must say for yourselves, I believe in GOD; that is, every one of you must be saved by your own faith: Yet it is my duty to be laying up a stock of prayers for you, and when I ask, it ought to be in faith, "not wavering," and so much the more earnest should I be in your behalf, as I know not to what darkness of ignorance I may leave you: for oh! where will this backsliding generation stop, who are now returning to these abominations which they formerly vomited up? as witness, their keeping (or rather prophaning) of this Christmas-day, against which observation of holy days, as they call them, much is written and said by able and pious men, and I have enough to satisfy myself: but shall say nothing here but this, that any who will observe shall

ſhall find, that they who are moſt earneſt in obſerving theſe things, for which they have no expreſs command from GOD, are leaſt careful in keeping what is commanded. My children, the darker the time be wherein you live, the more diligently ſeek in unto him, "who is the light of the world; "he is the life and light of men." If you come unto him, he will in noways put you away, but will love and receive you more tenderly than I, or all the fathers and mothers in this world, can do: The greateſt pleaſure you can do him, is to go unto him, and to put all your wants over upon him, yea even ſin alſo. Happy is he or ſhe, who lay their ſins upon CHRIST JESUS, and take his croſs upon them! They ſhall ſoon come up "from the "wilderneſs leaning upon their beloved." He bare his croſs alone, but ſo cannot we, for he knoweth our weakneſs, and is ever with us, yea even when he ſeemeth to hide his face. O! who can expreſs the love of CHRIST? We may taſte of it, and the more we taſte, the more ſweetneſs ſhall we find: and know, that angels and men cannot expreſs the riches of that love, which ſhall be admired to all eternity. Oh! what is the world doing? or rather, what are they whom GOD calleth out of the world doing? and what am I, who am writing this, doing? that I am not with all my might ſeeking to have my heart fill'd with this love. Now GOD, who hath given to you my children, and to me, hearts as ſo many veſſels, firſt empty them of all vanities, and then fill them with his love.

SECT. XXIII. JANUARY 30th 1664.

WHEN ever I begin, I'm in pain what to say, until I commit my mind and pen unto GOD, the "FATHER of spirits, who giveth subtilty to the "simple, and to the young man knowledge and "discretion:" but as straitned in the beginning, I am sometimes so enlarged before I end, that I know not how to end; and how can it be otherwise, since it is my work to speak of GOD, of whom the more I think (and thoughts are far vaster than words) the more matter find I of thinking? my children, soon may you come to the end of all created things, if you sit down and think: your thoughts may easily pass thro' the habited and unhabited parts of the earth, and thro' the seas, and up thro' the firmament, and whole created heavens; also you may think on all that move within these, but at last the vast mind must stop when it thinketh on him who is INFINITE. When in our thoughts we come to the uttermost circle of the creation, can we then put out the finger, or can tell what is without? O! it becometh the most learned, and the wisest of men to profess their ignorance, and, with Moses, make haste to worship. As also we may trace up time to the beginning, and we may think that before that, there were neither angels nor men, nor a created world; but only that blessed BEING, which gave being to all things, who only is without beginning; in that consideration, can our thoughts reach unto him? They who have any stamp of the INFINITE GOD upon their minds will find no need of images to help them to worship him, who hath form'd our minds

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to have an other kind of IDEA of him, than the works of men's hands can repreſent: Our minds can go farther, than either tongue, or hands, or any of the reſt of our members. The way to worſhip him, "is to worſhip him in ſpirit and truth," as he hath commanded! What folly is it to go beyond his command? my children, beware of any ſuch things; do what is commanded, and you ſhall find no need of more; ſpend much of your time in thinking on GOD: the more you do ſo, the more ſhall you deſire ſo to do; and that which at firſt will be a little painful, ſhall at length become more pleaſant unto you than can be expreſſed. I aſſure you this is true, bleſſed be my GOD, I have felt it many a time; and yet ſo fooliſh am I, as often to wander from my reſt and happineſs. My children, will you not be certain of theſe truths, when you come to poſſeſs them? O! taſte and know that GOD is good: There is no other way for me to adviſe you to be happy, and oh, how fain would I have you happy! Let your vaſt thoughts run thro' all, and you ſhall never find true joy and peace until you come to GOD, in and thro' JESUS CHRIST: preſs thro' the many hindrances, which are in your way, and delay not a moment's time; for when once you have got near GOD, if then you can lament, it ſhall be for the moments you have ſpent without him. O! what ſhall I render to my GOD, for ſhewing me theſe things in any meaſure? I will even praiſe his name for ever and ever, and cite all of you ſo to do, and all that is in heaven above, and in this earth below, and in the ſeas, to ſing forth his praiſes for evermore, for that he is only truly

good, I leave it to you, my children, subscribed by your father.

Sic subscrib. WALTER PRINGLE.

SECT. XXIV. MARCH 19th 1664.

UPON Monday gone eight days, at three in the afternoon, at this place, my truly worthy sister of Eccles passed from her earthly dwelling to her place, which our blessed LORD went long since to prepare in heaven. She took her sickness upon the 15th day of March 1663, (the day my son Walter was baptized) and was very near a year under sickness and extreme pain; which, to the admiration of all about her, she endured most patiently, often in the time of her most violent pain, praying her GOD and FATHER not to take off her the least grain-weight of what was his will to lay on. More christian expressions I never heard from any, than from her: in the whole time of her sickness, all which time, except some exercise upon her mind for one day or two in the beginning, she had never the least doubt of her interest in GOD; but expressed her full assurance of his mercy and love to her, through JESUS CHRIST. These several years past, she hath liv'd a stranger in this earth, separated from this world, and the things in it. She had a great love to her son Alexander; the only reason, I know, was the assurance which she had of his dying in the LORD. In her sickness she took her son John's engagement, to seek to become the LORD's; telling him, that unless, he were HIS, he should be none of HER's. I know none, who had more true love to the people of GOD than she had; and

and now faith and hope are ceaſed, but that remaineth perfected. O! that excellent grace of LOVE to GOD; where it is, it muſt deſcend to thoſe whom he begetteth: verily this is all we have to ſeek, for all other graces follow it as ſo many wheels moving ſwiftly and pleaſantly. "They that love him will "keep his commandments;" and they will not find them grievous, but as their meat and their drink. Hath not this LOVE made many of his ſing in the fires, and in the greateſt torments, which cruel enemies could invent? Oh! it is not in the power of devils or men, to make that ſoul, which hath this precious treaſure, unhappy but for one moment of time. We may, by ſuffering it to ly as dead under aſhes, be ſtrangers to our own happineſs: but when GOD is pleaſed to ſhed it abroad in the heart, O how pleaſant is that flame! There is wearying in all things elſe; but the ſoul that findeth itſelf filled with, and within the Love of God, will aſſuredly deſire to abide there for ever and ever, knowing that therein alone is their happineſs. My dear children, what way ſhall I prove to you the truth of this? but I intreat you to enquire of theſe who in themſelves have felt it; and if any of you be ſo blinded, as to think, that they ſpeak from intereſt, then go to dying men and women, when they are ſtepping into eternity, and enquire of them, if they think any happy, but theſe who are within the loving kindneſs of GOD. Every one that hath lived at a diſtance from GOD, doth change his thoughts when he ſees death near him. But, Oh! my children, put not off till that time come upon you, leſt you ſuffer for your folly for ever and ever. But if theſe two witneſſes prove not this excellent truth to you, can there be a ſurer way, than for you to try

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it yourſelves; as when a private man hath news brought him, that a people hath choſen him to be their king, is he not certain of the truth thereof, when he goeth, and ſitteth down upon his throne by the hearty conſent of all the people? more certain ſhall you be, when in yourſelves you prove this truth.

SECT. XXV. OCTOBER 3d 1664.

I WAS ſummon'd to compear before the high commiſſion court, the 19th day of July laſt, for declaring that I could not own Mr. James Straton for my miniſter, nor could join in prayers read by the reader, nor in ſinging the concluſion, which is now brought in: My reaſons, I need not here inſert. I made my compearance before that court upon the 21ſt, of July laſt, and got their ſentence, as I have it under the clerk's hand, of the ſame date. I went unto the biſhop of Edinburgh, upon the 8th of September laſt, but could not take the oath, as he tender'd it, viz. without any explanation, but the words as they ſtand: This much he expreſſed to me, that ſupremacy and allegiance ſhould always go together. And when I alledged the parliament their explanation of that oath, he anſwered, that there was no ſuch thing in record, and that the biſhops were not then ſitting in parliament. Alſo at the high commiſſion, it was ſaid to me, by the primate, who did preſide, that it was true, that CHRIST is head of the church, but it could not be expected, that he ſhould exerciſe that office here in the world; and to whom did it ſo properly belong to do it, as to the king? this oath is to be found in 1ſt and 11th acts of the firſt parliament

liament of KING CHARLES the II. Here I am interrupted.

SECT. XXVI. OCTOBER 4th 1664.

AFTER I got my ſummons, and before compearance (having left the company I was with, upon the windleſtraw law) for a quarter of an hour, I was earneſt with GOD in prayer, that he would ſo guide me, a worm in the buſineſs, as that his Name might be glorified, his people edified, and mine own ſoul better'd. After prayer I reſolved to take the verſe in my Bible, which by providence caſt firſt up to me, which is a way I rarely uſe to take, and bleſſed be my GOD, who ſo favoured me, as to ſend me that word, 1 John v. 15. "And if "we know, that he hear us, whatſoever we aſk, "we know that we have the petitions, that we de-"ſired of him:" by this I was much ſtrengthned to put my truſt in him, who never leaveth his in the time of need, and who I know, will encreaſe my ſtrength, if troubles ſhall be increaſed; ſo that it is all one whether the waters be ebb or deep, ſeeing the head is ever born up. O! everlaſting arms are underneath all thoſe that ſuffer for him: He never ſendeth any a way-faring upon their own charges, of which number I am now bold to reckon myſelf, tho' moſt unworthy. I ſhall not here inſert the reaſons againſt that oath, ſince the moſt part of the LORD's people, in this land, are ſo clear againſt it; yea, many have already grounded their ſufferings upon the refuſing of it, who yet are moſt free to give allegiance to the king: but the oath as it ſtands, I know ſhall appear every day more and more unjuſt,

juſt, and againſt the prerogatives of our LORD and King, whoſe ſkirt of his robe, I bleſs GOD, I have not put forth my hand to cut off, now when any who pleaſeth may do it: but it will not always be ſo, for he will come forth conquering, and to conquer. O how ſhall his enemies be then aſhamed, when in their hands ſhall be found (with reverence may I ſay it) pieces of CHRIST's Glory! O that patience may have its perfect work in all the ſaints! Now for myſelf, altho' I am a ſufferer, and may be a loſer for the time, for the laſt high commiſſion day, I was order'd, to be ſummon'd upon 15 days, to pay the fine, yet I know all the Arithmeticians in the world ſhall not be able to number my gains: the ſkill reacheth but the finite things; the wiſdom of this world, judgeth that in this, I am not ſo careful of you, my children, as I ſhould; GOD is my witneſs, how dearly I love you, and how careful I have been to provide for you, even the things of this world, far leſs foolifhly to put away what my father left unto me, which is now by GOD's bleſſing better'd: I need not here inſert how much, ſince I judge it beſt to quite it, when my LORD calleth for it, untold; in theſe caſes, the left hand ſhould not know what the right doth. I can't reckon how oft I have held up my hand before GOD, and promiſed to be always ready to forſake all for him: ſomewhat of this you may find pages 15th and 20th. When you know what a worthy one he is, which cannot be known, then ſhall you find this to be true wiſdom, and that loſing of the life for him is gaining of it. My children, ſuſpend your thoughts of me in this buſineſs, until you be enlightned from above, or elſe till death come; then I know, I ſhall be approven of you.

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MEN's approbation is to me a very small business, only I fain would have you consenting to every parcel of truth, the least of which is worth a thousand worlds, which pass away; but truth remaineth for ever. Blessed are they who sell their all to buy it: many times it hath been my prayer, that whenever I should suffer, for now I have been long without a cross, it might be for righteousness sake; Blessed be my GOD, who hath heard me; for tho' as yet I can scarce give my confinement, or what is yet upon me, the name of suffering; yet I know that in his account, it is a filling up of what is behind of the afflictions of CHRIST in my flesh: O! I rejoice that I have flesh to do this. And now, O blessed GOD, who makest thy strength perfect in weakness, and who hitherto hast helped me, carry me through even to the end; and as the furnace groweth hotter, strengthen me to endure it; and never leave me, nor forsake me in it, nor yet in prosperity. I look to be left of my dearest friends, yea even, it may be, of thy people, and of the wife in my bosom. In all this I heartily submit unto thee, holy FATHER; but blessed be thou who callest me, not to submit to be left of thee: I look not always to have the sense and feeling of thy presence with me, come and go as pleaseth thee; only cause me to believe, when I see not, and when my finger is not in the print of the nails, nor my hand in thy blessed side; by my unbelief, I cannot glorify thee, but by faith I can. O I bless and praise thy infinite wisdom, and goodness, for thus ordering it.

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SECT. XXVII. December 5th 1664.

UPON Thurſday, the 24th of November laſt, I was taken from this place, by three of the life-guard, the fourth had fallen ſick at Whitburn, and a meſſenger of arms, that night to Gingle-Kirk, and upon the morrow into the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, where I thought to have ſtay'd ſome time, and to have written to you, my children, while there a priſoner of JESUS CHRIST; but I had no opportunity of doing this, the little time I was there, being ſo throng'd with viſits. Upon the Tueſday thereafter, this ſecond high commiſſion (without any application from me to them, or appearance before them) paſt ſentence upon me to find bond to enter to the magiſtrates of Elgin in Murray upon or before the firſt of January next, and to abide within the burgh, and bounds of the ſaid town, during the king's pleaſure; and if the fine impos'd by the firſt high commiſſion be not paid at Candlemaſs next, I am then to enter within the tolbooth of the ſaid burgh. I know not if this new commiſſion could, without new citation, meddle with the affairs of the laſt, whoſe commiſſion is worn out. I had more friends this time than before; but the biſhops carry all in that court, as they pleaſe; yet my heavenly FATHER giveth me the cup, therefore deſire I moſt chearfully to drink it; bleſſed for evermore be my LORD JESUS, who drank another ſort of a cup for me: my greateſt deſire in this world is, that he may be glorified by my bonds and ſufferings, and that his people may be ſtrengthned, and that ſome here, and in the place I go to, who are yet far off, may be

be brought near to GOD. Bleſſed be he, who can make any mean effectual: I am confident, thro' the goodneſs of my GOD, that not only myſelf, but others alſo, ſhall be much better'd by my ſufferings; thus ſhall the deſign of enemies be fruſtrate. O! he is wiſe, who ruleth heaven and earth, and maketh all things to work for his own glory, and the good of his people: Praiſe, praiſe be to him, who hath twiſted theſe two together, ſo as devils and men cannot ſeparate them. Enemies (in a manner) would come better ſpeed if they ſat idle, than by working. I ſhall only mention a remarkable paſſage, which GOD in his providence tryſted me with, during my confinement here at home: upon Saturday the 22d of October laſt, I was in the fields from 3 in the afternoon till 6, but got little, until coming home in the quiet of the evening, thinking what might become of my wife and children; I was led to this compariſon of a king ſending one of his ſervants into a hazardous piece of ſervice; and if the king ſhould ſay to that ſervant, be not troubled for your wife and children, for I will take theſe into my care, then that ſervant needed not be anxious for them; and far leſs ſhould I, the ſervant of the KING of KINGS, the GOD of truth, who can and will perform his word. Upon this I was made to give up my wife and children unto GOD, with full aſſurance that he would care for them. It had been my duty never to have doubted of this, tho' no other confirmation had been given me: but bleſſed be he, who knowing my very great weakneſs, ſent his ſervant Mr. Edward Jamieſon upon the Tueſday thereafter, who in his exhortation to the family, had the very ſame compariſon to the full; although I had not then made it known to any in

this world. And now what need I fear the loss of my two sons, or of all I have in this world, since the great and Mighty One hath taken you off my hands? Oh that you, my children, when you come to age, may give away yourselves to HIM; you are lost for ever if you do it not. When you come to any knowledge, "Use all diligence to make your "calling and election sure." It is great matter of joy to me, that in letters from my daughter, I have under her hand breathings after GOD, who will not quench her smoaking flax, nor break her bruised reed. GOD give her grace to hold on her way: and so wax stronger and stronger. O to have you all in the way that leadeth to glory and rest! PRAISE, PRAISE BE TO HIM, who can bring you into it, and lead you in it.

SECT. XXVIII. JANUARY 7th 1665.

UPON the 22d day of the last month, I went from this with a purpose to go to Elgin; but before I reach'd Edinburgh, my brother Torwoodlie gave in a petition in my name to the lords of council, who granted me to the last of this month, recommending to the high commission to grant me a longer time. Altho' I seem to be at man's disposal, yet blessed be he, in whose hands I am, to whom this morning I have renewed my vow, upon the reading of the 12th verse of the v. of the Revelation, with this thought, that I need never fear to follow, thro' the thickest tentations, troubles, and enemies, such a General, who's is power and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honour and glory, and blessing. Soldiers will couragiously go on, and scorn dangers,

dangers, when they have a wife and valiant captain before them. But knowing mine own infirmities and weakneſs, my engagements is only in theſe terms, and bleſſed be he, who knoweth my frame, and alloweth it ſo, that he, without whom I can do nothing, giving me light, ſtrength, and grace, then ſhall I walk in the way of his obedience, and never fly from his banner. My ordinary this morning, was, from the 9th verſe of this vth Chapter to the end, I think it is a ſtrange way of reckoning our bleſſed LORD WORTHY, who was ſo from all Eternity, for that he was ſlain, and hath redeemed us. O! bleſſed be thou, O GOD and FATHER, who out of the wonderful riches of thy infinite free Love, accountedſt the redemption of ſinners ſuch a great work. Now I deſire to wear that crown, which thou wilt give unto me, (the leaſt of thine, and chief of ſinners) for that end, that I may throw it down at thy foot-ſtool, and aſcribe unto thee, who "ſitteth "upon the throne, and unto the LAMB, BLESSINGS, "HONOUR, GLORY, and POWER, FOR EVER AND "EVER, AMEN.

SECT. XXIX. Elgin tolbooth, MARCH 22. 1665.

UPON the 10th day of January, I attended upon the ſitting of the high commiſſion, who did not then ſit, but adjourn'd unto the 24th of January; at which time I came again to Edinburgh, with an intention to come on my journey; but the high commiſſion gave a continuation of my entry to this place, to the 10th of this month. Theſe delays were obtained upon the account of my wife's being big with child, who, thro' the goodneſs of GOD,

was safely delivered January 30th of a daughter, to whom we gave the name of Anne before baptism, which I delayed, in regard I could not get it done, in such a cleanly way as was desired. My child, so soon as thou art come into this world, thou art a sufferer, not as an evil doer, blessed be GOD: O that he may give thee inward grace, even tho' the outward seal should not be obtained, praise be to him, who doth not keep out, nor cast out, when men do: he is against the shepherds, who feed not the flock; he himself will seek out his flock, and save them, Ezek. xxxiv. My GOD hasten to do so, for thy glory's sake. February 23d, our ordinary reading in the family, in the morning, was Psal. lv. I thought to have done no more in the family myself, for I expected Mr. Edward Jamieson, who was detained until the time of our exercise was past; so it did ly upon me, some christian friends being with us, to sing Psal. vii. from the 9th verse to the end, and to read the 11th Chapter of Ezekiel. This I mention, that I may hold on our ordinary, if ever the LORD shall bring me back to them again; as also that it may appear, how well our ordinary was trysted with our present condition; for I believe, that if the best of men had known our state, and set themselves to write suitably to it, they could not have sent us words so pertinent, as are especially the 16, 17, &c. verses of Ezek. 11th Chapter. LORD, open the eyes of those, who would equal what they now write unto the scriptures of truth, upon which my soul desireth to feed, as upon green pastures, finding myself in them, for the letter profiteth not. Upon the 24th of February, I came from Greenknow, and left my aged mother, my dear wife and children, friends and family, and all for-

for his sake, for whom it is nothing to be kill'd all the day long, when he enlightneth and strengthneth the poor soul. For HIS SAKE, came often in my mind, when the stormy weather was sharp on my face; for I had sore weather betwixt Aberdeen and this, such as useth not to be in March. But Oh! what is all this when compared with what is recorded of the saints in former times? I must cut short, for in this prison, I have not a place alone, except an upper room, which I may retire to, but cannot write. I entered in here upon the 10th day of this month, my prayers is, that I may not go out, until my GOD carry me out without sin. O that he may keep me faithful unto death: and, as my ordinary is this morning, Gen. xvii. to the 9th verse, "May be my GOD and the GOD of my seed "after me;" even so be it.

SECT. XXX. Elgin, JULY 5th 1665.

BLESSED be my GOD, whom I desire to serve with my outward and inner man, who, in a cleanly way, brought me out of the tolbooth sooner than I expected; and that in the very nick of a little piece of extremity; for, upon the 6th of April a prisoner was put in beside me, whom the magistrates resolve to keep very strictly, therefore we were closed within the room, where we did ly all that night: although I knew not how long I might be in that condition; yet I bless GOD, I had never more peace in my mind; for even in the night time, when I could not sleep, because of noisome smell, I was refreshed in my spirit, with remembrance, that it was for HIS NAME'S SAKE.

Upon the morrow the town council met, and without any desire from me, past an act, that I should be removed to a chamber of the house, out of which I had my diet; and accordingly the provost and bailies came and brought me alongst. Thus did my LORD give me favour in the eyes of those among whom I am cast in the tolbooth, I could not worship, except in the Spirit only, which I know is most acceptable to GOD, when further liberty is denied; but in my new prison I might be alone, when I pleased; my only disadvantage was, that it was not so well air'd, as the former; which I think, occasioned very sore eyes to me, so that I was wholly disabled from reading and writing, and had sometimes thoughts that I might come wholly to lose my bodily sight, which had been but little to lose in his service, who is my LORD and Master the KING of KINGS. I made it my prayer, with submission to his holy will, that he would continue to me that rich temporal mercy of sight: after which time (blessed be GOD, the hearer of prayers) mine eyes became daily better, only yet they grew worse when I read or writ much, which is the cause why I have here written so little to you my children; yet nothing I have said, or can say, will prevail with you, to lay hold on eternal life, without GOD's blessing, the consideration whereof may stir me up to pray more for you, tho' I should write less; but I desire both may go together. Upon the 10th of May I was liberate from close prison, by an order of the lords of secret council, which was brought to me by my nephew Walter, giving me the bounds of a mile about this town, during their pleasure. This was obtained by Stitchill and the laird of Haining, far beyond their own and

and others expectation. By the will of GOD I have got this half freedom; and when ever it shall be his good will to take it from me again, I desire to be fully content. O! MOST HIGH, I am at thy disposal, to do with me, and make of me, whatsoever thou wilt, let me never repine. My dear children, these are words but for myself; but so soon as you shall receive the SPIRIT of TRUTH, then shall you, from time to time, be taught right words. O that you may receive the LORD JESUS, then shall you with him freely get all things. The INFINITE GOD is more than all things, and he is the portion of his people. O how is the world blinded, in esteeming them an oppressed, sighing, poor and needy people! whereas their worst things are much better than the world's best: and even that which maketh the ignorant count them miserable, is their greatest happiness within time, viz. the cross of JESUS CHRIST; for what is more desireable, and profitable, than to be made conformable unto him, in his sufferings and death? O that I may become more and more familiar to his sweet sweet cross! blessed be he who hath allured me in, under it, even when I was shunning it. Now I may acknowledge, that it is light, easy, and pleasant; altho' my separation from my dear wife, and you my children, is as cutting off the head from the body; yet such killing is delightsome to me for HIS SAKE, who giveth me now and then many a sweet moment. This may well serve, while Eternity come, and I enter IN where moments cannot be counted. My dear children, with all your might and speed hasten to serve my blessed LORD: In all the world, you shall not find so good a master, nor yet such rich REWARDS, as he giveth to HIS, whom he is

pleased

pleased to call "Friends, and not servants," yea, hereafter they shall be somewhat more than friends, 1 John iii. 2.

SECT. XXXI. JULY 20th 1665.

WHEN I think upon the commanded duty, Deut. vi. 7. and elsewhere thro' the word, and that now I am denied the liberty of conversing with you, my children, I am the more earnest to exhort you by writing, to chuse GOD for your PORTION. None but he alone can help you, in the time of your greatest need; neither can any other lead you safely thro' this dangerous wilderness of a world. The many thousands of Israel would have perished in the desert, if they had not had his cloud before them "in the day time, and pillar of fire in the night." If the joint might and wisdom of all these could not save them, how much less can any single person be safe? especially in thir latter days, wherein the devil is raging, knowing that his time is but short. "Verily, now it is, that the righteous "scarcely are saved." In part I was witness to the truth of this, upon the 29th of July last, in the death of an eminent professor, which I will not particularly mention. O! my dear children, give diligence to make your calling and election sure. If you ask me what you should do, "that you may "inherit eternal life." I desire you to go to the LORD JESUS CHRIST: but oh! come not from him sorrowful, when he telleth you to quite your vain sinful pleasures, and momentary delights; if you be his, you must crucify these. O! forsake all for him, and then go on with him, in your com-

company rejoicing, as the Ethiopian, Acts viii. 39. I your father, and to use the apostle's words, "prisoner of the LORD," beseech you to lay hold on what is freely offered to you in the gospel; nothing less than JESUS CHRIST, and with him all things. This would be my desire to you, if these were my last words, as I know not but they may. Truly I find most peace in my mind, when I am fully content, if so the will of GOD be to lay down my body in the grave here, tho' separate from all my relations. Whom had Moses with him when his life went from his body? yet I had never more freedom than now, to desire with submission, a while's lengthning of my days; for I know, that shall be for my good, the longer I bear the cross of my LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. For me now to seek to enter into my rest, when the LORD JESUS is in the camp, with his little troop, against his many enemies, is, as if a soldier should seek a pass to go to his own peaceable habitation, and leave his king and general in the fields, in the heat of war. When at night I lay down in my solitary bed, it is refreshing to me to think, I am in my LORD'S LEAGURE. But I dare not boast, for I have not yet put off mine armour; and tho' I should endure, as a good soldier, even to the end, yet I should have no cause of glorying, except in the LORD, by whose strength only I shall be able to stand, and overcome to the end. If I were not assured of his presence with me, I would even give over, and say, O let me not go one step hence, unless thou go with me: my weakness is such, and the difficulties in the way so many, that angels are not sufficient guides for me; the holy Spirit of truth, which leadeth unto all truth, is

is the guide I desire to walk with and follow. O that you, my children, may be led by this blessed Spirit! then shall we arrive at one and the same glorious habitation.

SECT. XXXII. JULY 31st 1665.

MY children, it would be one of the greatest pleasures temporary, for me to enjoy your company; to live with you and your mother, tho' it were in the meanest condition, it would certainly be my choice. If I had not given away my will unto GOD, desirous never to make any choice for myself, knowing that it is most unsafe so to do; for the wisest of men, thinking to establish themselves, have made choice of that which hath proven their ruin; and on the contrary, the poor and simple, who have been careful for nothing, but have made their necessities known unto GOD by prayer, with thanksgiving, O! how well those have been helped, against all their enemies, and securely led thro' all the difficulties of a world? they have the word of a King, even of the GOD of truth who cannot lie, engaging his INFINTE WISDOM, POWER, and goodness to be with them and for them: "blessed is "the people, and the person, whose GOD is the "LORD." O! it is better to be even in the hottest furnace of affliction, when he is present, than to be sitting upon the most flourishing throne in this earth, when he is absent. Blessed be my GOD, who often raiseth me up to that true knowledge of things, as that I would not change my cross with a crown; no not the present sweetness of the cross, with the present delights of a crown, which hath not so much

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as a true being; for none of the senses are fully satisfied by it; and, tho' they were, yet were it but for a moment, but this cross is a seed which bringeth forth an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. My dear children, sow not to the flesh, but to the Spirit, that of the Spirit you may reap life everlasting. Be not so madly foolish, as to think you may pass away your youth-hood, in following the vain lusts and pleasures of the flesh, and thereafter turn unto GOD. It is true he hath been pleased to accept of some after the wanderings of their youth, and I may acknowledge myself to be one of these, to the praise of his rich free grace: but for any, because of this, to be encouraged to go on in their wicked ways, is, as if one would commit these crimes which deserve death, and so be brought to the place of execution, not fearing, because some being cast over, have broken the cord, and then have gotten the king's mercy. But no comparison can hold forth the loss, and hazard of these, who lose their immortal souls; this may be better thought on, than can be express'd. My children, the consideration of your own hazard may be a mean to make you fly into a SAVIOUR: but O! when you come to know him, who is the chief of all the thousands in heaven and earth, then you would not quite his service, even tho' there were not a reward for the righteous. To stand as a servant before him in this lower world, and to go through the hardest pieces of service for him, is in itself, a very rich reward. This testimony of him and of his ways, I desire to leave in record to you, my children; with this confession, that I cannot express the thousand part of that worth, which is in him, "who is altogether lovely." O how gladly would

would I have you all happy in him! I know assuredly, that you can be so no where else: this your selves may know, if you will be at leasure to search it out. O! "be still and know that he is "GOD" and the only fountain of all good: go unto him, and abide with HIM; I assure you, he will never put you away. You know not what evils may be in your time, O! make sure your interest in HIM; then shall you safely ride out the greatest storm that can arise, then your anchor is within the vail. This is the only thing I press you with, since nothing beside this is necessary. Now, I will go pray for you, and for the work and people of my GOD, for which I desire to spend this day: O that, according to my ordinary this morning, Deut. xxvi. 17, 18, 19, you, my children, "may "avouch the LORD to be your GOD;" and that he may avouch you to be of the number of his peculiar people!

SECT. XXXIII. AUGUST 31st 1665.

FOR the space of some weeks past, I have been entertained with the expectation of liberty to go home; which, tho' it would be matter of very much joy to me, yet it hath been my constant desire, that it might not succeed, unless it were the good will of my GOD; for O how unsafe it is for me, to have, or to follow, a will of mine own! I have ground to believe, that he hath heard me in this; and that it is for my best, altho' a little grievous to my carnal mind, the continuation of my bonds, separation from wife, children, and others, not knowing for how long. But blessed be he, who hath

hath my times in his hand: O that I may never limit him, and may never give over truſting IN HIM! then ſhall not my expectation fail for ever. Six days together I was aſſured by ſeveral, that my liberty was granted; but upon Saturday laſt, I got letters from my friends, ſhewing the contrary, to their great diſappointment. In the time wherein I had thoughts of going home, ſome of theſe days, my ordinary was Judges vii. and my prayer was, that my going might not be as the going of thoſe mentioned in the 3d verſe, or in the end of the 7th verſe; how much aſhamed would theſe be, when Gideon and the 300 returned with great victory? certainly they had but little pleaſure in their homes. O how much greater ſhall my victory and prize be, if I be kept faithful, and endure to the end, even unto death! Then ſhall it not repent me, that I have been here a ſtranger, with many a ſad and heavy heart. When I ſee others, in the evenings, return from their labours to their own homes, and I to my ſolitary chamber; and when I hear the children of others weep, and think that mine may not only be weeping, but groaning in ſickneſs, yea, it may be, breathing out their laſt, and I not ſeeing them; as alſo, when I think that my aged mother may be paſſing hence, and I, her only child now remaining, not with her to perform my laſt duty to her; it hath been my prayer to GOD, with ſubmiſſion to his holy will, that he may be pleaſed to allow me this privilege. However he diſpoſe, I have good ground to believe, that he will aſſuredly make all work for my good, altho' I ſhould not any more ſee my dear wife and children in this life, yet I am perſuaded that he whom I ſerve can eaſily make up that great loſs to me; yea,

I know that the enjoyment of them, with all other earthly bleſſings, might be far worſe to me, than the loſs of them is. How ſoon may all theſe gourds wither, and anger come in the place of exceeding gladneſs, as it was with Jonah? There may be ſome pleaſure, for the time, in building upon ſand; but grief and ſorrow cometh, when the winds and ſtorms ariſe, and the building falleth: O that in this ſtormy hour of trial, it may appear, that I have not been building upon ſand, but upon the rock of ages! When I look to myſelf, and conſider the failings of others, which alas with much ſorrow I hear of, then have I great ground to fear; but when I lift up mine eyes to my GOD, and think on his excellent loving kindneſs, and wonderful goodneſs, who hitherto hath helped me, then have I no cauſe to doubt for the time to come. Bleſſed be he, who can eaſily ſubdue all the enemies which are in my way to heaven, when the waters are like to go over mine head, then will HE give me wings, with which I may mount up. I have nothing to fear, but ſin, and unbelief, the greateſt of ſins. O that henceforth I may "live that life, which is "by faith in the SON of GOD." My dear children, preſs, with all your might, to live this life of faith, that your end may be eternal glory. O how chearfully would I endure this little ſeparation from you, if I had aſſurance to have you all with me for ever in heaven! Oh I cannot think, without great grief, of wanting one of you there. Many prayers are put up for you, and I hope I have ground to believe they are heard, thro' the riches of GOD's free grace. O ſet to, "and work "out your own ſalvation," in the ſtrength of the LORD,

LORD. I desire to spend the rest of this day in prayer, as many others, I hope, are doing.

SECT. XXXIV. SEPTEMBER 16th. 1665.

THE expectation of gain maketh the labouring man rise timely in the morning, that he may go about his toilsome work. This thought made me rise out of my bed this morning, desiring to employ my little pains in these things which perish not. And O what profit and advantage were it, if by any thing I insert here, I could do any good to the immortal souls of you my dear children! You are often in my thoughts, and the matter of my prayers; for the more I am separate from you here, the more pressing and fervent my desires are, to have you with me for ever, IN MY FATHER'S KINGDOM, into which, when once I am entred, I cannot come back to inform you of these everlasting joys and pleasures. GOD alloweth of no such mean; therefore, while yet in this world, desire I to live this as my LAST WILL to you; O flee from the wrath and condemnation of the great and DREADFUL GOD, with more speed and diligence, than if thousands of most cruel enemies were pursuing you with drawn swords at your heels. There is a possibility of escaping from men, and their strokes are but of short endurance; but you may see, in the 139th psalm, That there is no hiding or escaping from the ALMIGHTY, neither is there any delivery for those who are once shut down into that bottomless pit of utter darkness: but these wretches must there endure unspeakable torment, in everlasting flames, burning without the least comfort

of light. O "who can dwell with devouring fire," in that place, where all sorrows, sickness, filthiness, and pains will be confined; among all these thousands of devils, and damned souls, there will not be the least grain weight of pity one toward another. Serious thoughts of hell is certainly a strong motive to move a soul to come into JESUS CHRIST: But I verily believe, that a view of GOD's excellent, wonderful, and free loving-kindness, is a far more prevailing motive. O how strong are these cords of LOVE! None but they that feel them know, and what they know is only this, that they who are once tied in them, and drawn with them, can never break, or come out of them. O sweet and pleasant chains! It is only true liberty to be in them, it is true health to be sick of love to this LOVELY ONE. What a delightful thing is it, to sit, or stand under his banner of love! IT IS OUR HEAVEN here, and it is the heaven of angels, and saints above; who have no other, will never desire any other food, but this HIS LOVE, which had no beginning, and never will have any end. The soul which once getteth a true taste of it will ever desire more of it. We cannot send up so useful a petition, as to pray that this love may be shed abroad in our hearts; and it were our wisdom often, every hour, to repeat this desire in our thoughts, when we may not conveniently utter it with our lips. This JEWEL is (so to speak) the first mover of all other graces; and it will shine in heaven, when they shall cease. This maketh the sojourning saints endure, and chearfully suffer all things, finding the sharpest afflictions, and heaviest crosses easy and light. My children, GOD who only knoweth the heart, knoweth how earnest I am, to have you live

live this excellent life of faith in JESUS CHRIST, which worketh by love. It is as a fire in my bosom, the desire I have, to have you fully perswaded of these truths, which I both know and feel. There is none in the world, whose happiness I desire more than yours, who are to me dear as mine own soul. I shall not give over to pray for you, so long as I am in this life.

SECT. XXXV. SEPTEMBER 28th 1665.

VOLUMES cannot contain what may be said of the LOVE OF GOD. Tho' the whole world were full of reams of clean paper, and all that live in it had every one the pens of ready writers; yet all could not fully express his excellencies, WHO IS LOVE, 1 John iv. 8. All are saying, "Who will "shew us any good?" But alas! few seek it where alone it is to be had, even in HIM, TO LOVE HIM with all the soul, heart and mind. O what joy and peace it bringeth! They who knew no better did place their happiness, in having a friend, whom they might trust, and love as themselves, to whom they might impart all their joys and griefs, knowing well that by a true sympathy, which is a pleasant harmony, they would take and bear their friend's pressures as their own: Such have met as vessels full, ready to burst for want of a vent; but when they have unbosomed themselves to others, have felt a present ease; or as one travelling under a heavy burden, meeting with another, who taketh the half from him, he then doth walk easily under the remainder. Many rules are given, how to make choice of such a friend, all which may readily fail:

for even in former times, and far more may this be now, when love and truth are so exceedingly decayed, that an oath is not so much as half a promise was before: David was deceived by his familiar friend, in whom he trusted, and yet he had wisdom to choose. My children, "I will shew you a more "excellent way," than to place your confidence in man, "even in GOD the ROCK of AGES." O trust in him evermore, and assuredly he will never fail you. This advice I desire to give you, that when any of you is surprised with joy, sorrow, anger, or any of these passions of the mind, you may then abstain from speaking to any creature, until first in secret, you pour out your heart to GOD, and vent your mind unto him. How many in these passionate fits, have spoken and done that of which they have repented all their time? We have need to watch over ourselves, even while in our best wits; but how much more, when we are out of ourselves, being transported with any of these passions? As there is great hazard at these times to vent to creatures, so, on the contrary, there is safety, and it is the fittest time for one to go in secret to GOD; for then is the soul most awakened, and the heart easily poured out, lying as wax melted and soft before his seal: And O how safe is it not to come away, until he hath set upon the soul his firm stamp and impression! This bringeth peace to the mind, maketh the countenance to shine, and the Christian's whole walk comely. I may, to his praise declare, that at such times as I got near access to GOD, I find my voice and words more pleasant, and looks more beautiful, than at other times; and since this is in the outward, O it is much more in the inward of the mind and soul which hath com-

communion with GOD! As alſo there is true ſafety in going to him at theſe times, for we are but weak and fooliſh, and cannot bear theſe preſſures, and know not how to walk under them: But when the ALMIGHTY's everlaſting arms are underneath us, we need not care how heavy our burdens be, and INFINITE WISDOM giveth that wiſdom and ſpirit to his own, which the men of this world are not able to reſiſt, as Acts vi. 10. O that all his people were more leaning to his wiſdom and ſtrength, and were wholly leaving off to "walk "in the light of the ſparks of their own kindling: "Then ſhould he be unto them a cloud by day, "and a pillar of fire to guide them in the night, a "ſtrong tower and hiding place in the evil day;" yea a ſtrong tower and rock higher than enemies can reach unto. "The righteous flee unto him, "and are ſafe, for none can pluck them out of his "hand." O, my children, "let this GOD be "your refuge." The laſt letter, I had from your dear mother, preſſeth me to pray for you, that GOD may ſhew mercy to you: I ſhall continue ſo to do, while in this life, GOD ſtrengthning me.

SECT. XXXVI. OCTOBER 10th 1665.

WHEN in the laſt days writing I mention the pleaſantneſs of countenance, and words of theſe who have near acceſs to GOD, I do not mean any alteration of the natural voice, which GOD hath given us to pray unto, and glorify him with, as well as to make uſe of in our converſation with men: neither do I think, that there ſhould be any affectation in countenance or geſtures, which is uncomely

comely in the ſight of men, and unpleaſant to GOD, who doth look to the inward frame and temper of the heart, and is only well ſatisfied with what cometh from that fountain, flowing from thence out, into the natural conduits, wherewith GOD hath endued us to praiſe him, and converſe with our neighbours to edification. This way our nature is ſanctified, but not taken away: What is ſinful we ſhould deſire to be wholly removed, but nothing more, there is nothing of ſin, in ſpeaking with a ſhriller hollow voice; but I love not to hear any ſpeak to GOD with a weeping voice, when they are not weeping. Many of far more worth than I am, have fallen into a cuſtom of this way of ſpeaking in prayer; therefore far be it from me to judge them, or ſpeak evil of them, eſpecially in this day, wherein many of the LORD's people are offended one at another, for things of no weight. O to ſee and feel that love among them, which thinketh no evil, but judgeth well of all things, except of what is ſinful; and yet we may hate the ſin, and truly love the perſon. The eye doth not hate the hand, becauſe there is a ſpot upon it: Children have their ſpots: O what would become of us, if the ſpotleſs majeſty of GOD had no more love to us, than we have to one another! but this is our happineſs, and the matter of our joy, that "His thoughts are not as our thoughts: In love "he covereth and doth away our iniquities;" but often we cannot paſs by the failings of each other, and live in love here with theſe, with whom we ſhall live eternally in heaven, in a full and perfect harmony, every one rejoicing in the happineſs of another, and ſo, as it were, making it their own.

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We ſhould be as members of one body in this lower life, but we ſhall be ſomewhat nearer, and more unite, in that glorious life above. Whenever the mind is lifted up to behold theſe things of that eternal and incorruptible kingdom, then it wondreth, that ever the thoughts ſhould wander, or take pleaſure any where elſe. Now my children, often when I am minding theſe laſting things, my next thoughts are, O to have you aſſured of that life! O that CHRIST were yours, and every one of you were HIS! When you find that you can be happy no where elſe, which you may eaſily do after ſearch, then run to him for LIFE and SALVATION; give HIM your whole heart, for he will have no partner. They who know him, hate ſo much as a thought of ſetting up of a fellow beſide him: They who are truly his temples, will not deſire a Dagon beſide him: His glory, which filleth heaven and earth, and yet is not contained within theſe, may ſoon fill our little narrow temples. Try your love to him, by your love to the brethren who are begotten of him. I never think myſelf right, until I find, not only this love to all the people of my GOD, but alſo even to all the common world a tenderneſs in my heart toward them; ſo that when I am in a right frame of ſpirit, and have the ſpirit of truth moving in me, then, if I hear any poor children weeping, tho' I know them not, yet my heart is moved toward them, as if they were mine own: and not only ſo, but I then alſo love mine enemies, and perſecutors, and all the creatures of GOD; ſo that I cannot take the life from the leaſt creeping thing, or a midge that doth flee. My children, thus do I make myſelf known to you, that you may be in ſo far the followers of me, as I am of my LORD

and

and Master JESUS CHRIST. O let him be your perfect pattern, especially now, when "many are "saying, Lo here is CHRIST, and lo there!" O search out, with all diligence, where he is, and abide with him, where he maketh his flocks to rest.

SECT. XXXVII. OCTOBER 25th 1665.

THE LORD revealed his purpose to Abraham, Gen. xviii chap. because he knew, "that "Abraham would command his children after him "to keep the way of the LORD," when he was gone, and gathered to his people. Certainly, whosoever truly feel the sweetness of this way, do desire to hold forth the excellency thereof, not only to their children and dearest relations, but also would gladly have the framed world to be a sharer with them in the same salvation. There is envy among the courtiers of the kings of the earth, and they desire none to be sharers with them in their prince's favour; but there is no such thing among the favourites of the King of heaven: for when they cannot get him glorified as they would, nor others stirred up so to do, then they cry out to the heavens, earth, depths, and to all that is within these, TO PRAISE HIM, who is goodness itself: and this is one evidence of his goodness, that he not only alloweth me to be happy, but also doth let me know that it is most accceptable to HIM, that I should, after Abraham's example, stir up my children, when I have laid down this tabernacle of clay, to be partakers of happiness with me, and with all these who are heirs of Abraham's faith. And now, in obedience to my GOD, I leave what

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is said in this book to you, my children, for whom I have many wrestlings and most earnest desires, that not one of you may be lost. O give all diligence to make sure your interest in GOD, and so fulfil your father's joy. I know (as much as may be known of you, so far as you are come in this world, most of you being yet very young) you love me, and I hope you will yet love me more when gone; shew forth this your love, in obeying of me in the LORD, which assuredly shall redound to your everlasting good. The children of Jonadab the son of Rechab were greatly commended for performing the words of their father, and were held as patterns to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, who refused to obey the commandments of GOD himself, which he sent to them by the prophets. Thus shall you be approven of the LORD GOD when you obey my desires, tho' given forth to you by me in great weakness, and yet may be made most effectual for your good, by the free grace and goodness of the ALMIGHTY, who usually worketh by weak means, and doth "call things that "are not, as if they were." The consideration of what he may do, doth encourage me to go about this my duty, which is as meat and drink to me, tho' a day of fasting for you, and the LORD's interest and people: With all my heart I wish you come not short in doing your part, but may speedily break off from the way of corrupt NATURE, SIN, and MISERY, and receive the word and spirit of truth, which will lead you into all truth; until CHRIST be in you, you are but as reprobates. He is no other way in his own in the world, but by his HOLY SPIRIT. O! lodge nothing in your hearts, that may hinder the entry

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of, or grieve this BLESSED SPIRIT when entered; so shall you perform your part, and shall then assuredly find, that GOD will perform his part, in giving you more than the desire of your hearts, even grace and glory, and every good thing. O who would not love such a LORD! who would not give all away for HIM! O sweet is the cross, and pleasant are the sufferings which lead to fellowship with him! I find that this is not the place of the Christians rest, whose best work is to desire more and more of CHRIST's love, but cannot bear it, when attained. Yet I must confess, that there is TRUE REST IN A SICK BED OF CHRIST'S LOVE; PRAISE TO HIM who is not angry, but well pleased, when I ask much of this his love, and is more ready to give, than I am to ask. O to be alone with him in a wilderness! as I may be, and sometimes am in this my banishment: O to desire never to converse with any in the world, unless it be to his glory, and for their good! but I may indeed acknowledge, that my bodily presence is weak, and that the way whereby I may profit others, you my children, and myself also, most, is by prayer; it should be my burden, that I am so seldom in this holy exercise.

SECT. XXXVIII. NOVEMBER 30th 1665.

UPON Saturday last there parted from me a pious minister, deposed for not conforming, who had come from Ross, to see other friends and me; and the second speaker here, said, the last Sabbath, that these who had met with so much lenity, as to be confin'd, when a harder sentence might have been inflicted

inflicted, would not abuse that lenity, by frequenting the companies of seditious persons, and meddling with these who are given to changes. Thus am I "the scorn of those who are at ease, and the contempt of the proud," who count it lenity to be a prisoner 124 miles from my family, the nearest way is so much; but as for me, I desire to wait on the LORD, "who cometh to judge the earth, "and will judge the world with righteousness, and "the people with his truth; in whose hand there "is a cup full of mixture, which the wicked of "the earth must take, and wring out the dregs "thereof, and drink them." But it may seem strange, how they can call honest ministers, who are the same now that they were before, men given to changes; whereas that is most applicable to them, who not long since were for presbytery and the covenant, but now are crying down that way which once they cried up. So that it is evident, they are the men who are given to changes, whose doctrine is turned about with every wind; happy shall they be who meddle not with them. These men think to find salvation in the scriptures, and yet they cannot cite one verse in all the bible, which maketh not against them, and their way. O what a fearful condition is this! "There is no "peace, saith my GOD, to the wicked." Upon the other hand, the godly meet with nothing in the world, that doth bring them more peace than troubles, afflictions and crosses; these are the seed of true joy, and the safe harbour of the Christian, who usually is never so well, as when sitting under the shadow of HIS LORD'S cross, which often is his banner of love over them. O! I would not change my present life (let be the life of glory, which is coming)

with these who have their portion in this life: O poor empty, and dreadful portion, since even their prosperity, which is their best, is their ruin! their bitterest usages, and most cruel mockings do not hinder me to pity them, and now and then heartily to pray for them: but sometimes I must pray against them, as the enemies of GOD; but for them, as they are mine. This I did when I came from hearing this discourse, on Sabbath last.

IT is worth my remembring, that the first word which fell to be my ordinary to read, was 2 Kings 19th chap. What is spoken in scripture to a nation, may be taken and applyed to a person. O! his word is always seasonable to me, when I get grace to apply it, but most of all when I find my need greatest. O! happy is the soul, which hath for it's GUIDE, HIS WORD AND SPIRIT. Sometimes, "when I sit in darkness, he is light round about me," and joy to me in the midst of sorrow. That I may close up this, and go to some other part of his service, even to call upon him for his work and people, I advise you, my children, to choose him, for your LORD and MASTER, whom I find to be the only CHIEF of all the thousands in heaven and earth: and therefore, O how gladly would I have you to make this wise choice, and so be eternally happy, living here in the same faith and hope, with your mother and me, which is the faith, that all these mentioned, Heb. 11. lived in, that, with us, you may be sharers of that happiness for ever in that life of glory! Dear children, your love to me now would make you think it hard, if you and I were in one place, after so long absence, and yet you might not be suffered to come near me. O! think how much more dreadful it will be, if any of you shall be so miserable,

rable as to ſtand on CHRIST'S LEFT HAND, on that great day, and ſee us your parents on our LORD'S RIGHT HAND, and you not dare to come near us, nor ſo much as once touch with your unclean hands, the loweſt HEM of our SHINING ROBES, which ſhall be given us, being DIPP'D in the blood of the LAMB. If in time you call upon HIM in ſincerity, you ſhall find that HIS grace is free to you, even as it is to us. GOD grant that you may do ſo, for it is your LIFE.

SECT. XXXIX. DECEMBER 8th 1665.

ALTHO' I meet with little lenity in my ſentence from men, yet I muſt confeſs, that I cannot but admire, when I conſider how gentle in all this GOD's dealing hath been with me: for as a young ſcholar, or green ſoldier, he hath trained me up from one ſtep to another; for at firſt, I was ſcarce able to endure a few days impriſonment in the caſtle of Edinburgh, being near my friends, and having precious Sir Andrew Ker for my fellow-priſoner, with whom I was of one mind. The next ſtep was, my being for ſome more time priſoner within the pariſh of Gordon, having leaſure to be preparing to endure and undergo further cenſure. My next priſon was the tolbooth of Edinburgh, and thereafter that of this town. Bleſſed be my GOD, who hath ſo taught me, as that I can endure a priſon, at ſuch a diſtance from my dear relations, and without ſuch a companion as Sir Andrew was, tho' I have no cauſe to complain of my preſent fellow ſufferer; for both of us I truſt have, and ſhall have cauſe to bleſs GOD, for caſting

our lot together, which is, and may yet more be to our advantage, both in our inward condition, and in the freeing us from snares and temptations. O! the wisdom of GOD, in ordering his concernments in the world, and in bringing the plots and devices of enemies to nought; yea, even turning these to their ruin, and to the ruin of their cause, and making them work together for his own glory, the good and safety of his people, and the establishment of his glorious work, to which, whatever doubtings and fears his chosen ones are now under, and to all that he hath done, they shall be forced in the end to cry, grace, grace. Then it shall appear that none of his people's imprisonments, confinements, fines, banishments and other pressures might have been wanting, and even now, when ever our eyes are opened to see OUR KING in his beauty, and the LAND AFAR OFF, which he hath promised to the overcomers; O then we would endure ten thousand times more for him. What will not the enlightned Christian undergo, that GOD may be glorified? It is their happiness, that he alloweth them any way, by which they may give HIM GLORY. This same morning I was in some sort of trouble, when I considered, that angels and saints have nothing to give unto him, who was infinitely glorious in himself, before these or any thing else were created; but this was mine ignorance, folly and pride; for should not we be content to be nothing, and rejoice to have nothing, that he may be all, and that we may receive all from him, who doth esteem himself the richer the more we take from him? Here I am interrupted with the visit of friends.

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SECT. XL. DECEMBER 9th 1665.

YESTERDAY I was ſtopp'd in a large field, and yet I know not what he, by whoſe ſpirit I deſire only to be led, will give me to ſay of him this morning; for it is not my way to think of what I am to write here before hand, neither was it my cuſtom, when I had a family to ſpeak to, to premeditate what I was to ſay, or to look on the place of ſcripture which I was to read, until I read it. Far be it from me to condemn thoſe that do otherways; or to tie you my children, to follow this my practice, which I only ſet down, that you may the better underſtand my way, and may not wonder, when you ſee that this day, I follow not forth the purpoſe I left yeſterday. All have not one and the ſame gift, and I deſire only to uſe the talent, which my GOD hath given me, which is ſo weak, yet bleſſed be he, for what he hath given me, that ſome may think it ſtrange, that I ſhould adventure to leave any thing in write, tho' it be only to my children, in this wiſe age, wherein very much wiſdom, learning, and piety, is to be found in books; ſome of theſe being alſo written by fathers to their children, full of many uſeful inſtructions, and prudent rules for them, to order their life by, in their greateſt concernments; to wit, in their religion, ſtudies, marriage, choice of friends, and ſuch like: So that tho' I were able, yet it were needleſs for me to add any thing of that kind, ſince you, my dear children, may read the beſt of theſe: But for your chriſtian walk, take none other rule but the word of GOD, and pray for his HOLY SPIRIT; "which will

" teach you all things, until you be endued with " power from on high." Account yourſelves but ignorant, altho' you had all the philoſophy in the world: as for theſe perfections, you may ſee the end of them; for if you could attain to Solomon's wiſdom, and enjoyments, which you may ſpeculate, you ſhould then the more knowingly cry out, " All is but vanity and vexation of ſpirit:" and yet verily there is a reſt for the ſoul, where it may enter in, and ſwim, but never win to the ſartheſt end of that OCEAN of PLEASURES; and yet be ſatisfied, deſiring no more than it hath, being able to hold no more joy, and being filled with all the fulneſs of GOD. Glory to him for evermore, who hath made man twice happy; for, when he had loſt his firſt happineſs, of his INFINITE LOVE he ſent his SON the LORD JESUS to bring poor man from under that fearful damnation, wherein he was lying, and to raiſe him up to a more ſure and bleſſed eſtate than the firſt was. Such a thing may be ſuppoſed, as that if the devil had known, that man's fall ſhould thus have redounded to his everlaſting welfare, and to the glory of GOD, he would not have tempted Adam and Eve, but would rather have ſuffered them and their poſterity to continue as they were. Many time the ſubtile enemy and his wicked inſtruments are deceived, and enſnared in their own devices. But, to return, I am ſure it will be a great part of angels and ſaints their SONG in HEAVEN, the LORD JESUS his great SALVATION. O! with what height of love, do the ſaints there ſay, FOR THOU HAST REDEEMED US? We ſhould think on what is above, that we may tune our low ſongs the higher. Bleſſed be he, who eſteem-

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eth our offering of praiſe a glorifying of him. Often when I think on this laſt verſe of the 50th pſalm, and when I can do no more, I repeat very frequently that word, PRAISE, PRAISE, PRAISE.

SECT. XLI. DECEMBER 13th 1665.

I ESTEEM that to be a well ſpent breath, which is ſpent in praiſing the GOD of all our mercies; happy are they that ſpend their ſtrength this way, or in any other piece of his ſervice, even in this life they ſhall renew it from time to time. And how comfortable will it be to them at the hour of death, when their conſciences bear them witneſs, that it hath been their endeavour to ſpend their time and ſtrength in his ſervice; and when the LORD by his Spirit ſhall be ſaying to their ſouls, "Come "good and faithful ſervants." O the ſick-bed ſhall then be as the very gates of HEAVEN. It is one of the moſt beautiful ſpectacles here below, to ſee a lively Chriſtian lay down their old worm tabernacle of clay: being aſſured not to be found naked, "but cloathed upon, that mortality may be ſwallow-"ed up of life." And laying down their bodies in the duſt, as ſeed caſt in the ground, that it may "be raiſed up a glorious body." It muſt die before it be quickned: It is true, Elias paſſed not thro' the natural and uſual way, for GOD can, in the twinkling of an eye, make this tranſlation and change; ſo ſhall it be with theſe of his own, who ſhall be living at the laſt day, even the great day of our LORD. Bleſſed be he, who gives me to expect that day, with any meaſure of FAITH, HOPE and

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joy. O! I am even beſt, when, in my mind, I am haſting to this day, and joining with all theſe who ſay; "Even ſo come LORD JESUS." O! he is coming, and with him a glorious train of ANGELS and SAINTS, who eſteem the more of their glory, that it is all given to them, by HIM. O! how glad are they to be clothed with their KING's livery? but when our KING ſhall ſit down upon his ſtately THRONE of JUDGMENT, what a dreadful ſight will that be to all that wretched number of priſoners, who will be brought trembling before him, to receive from him their ſentence of everlaſting condemnation, which ſhall ſo ſeize upon them, that they ſhall inſtantly receive the full perſwaſion that they ſhall never be happy, nor ever enjoy the leaſt moment's eaſe or relaxation from their unexpreſſible torment. My children, "knowing in ſome meaſure "the terror of the LORD," I deſire to perſwade you to flee from this terrible wrath, and to be reconciled unto GOD. A better advice cannot be given you; and this is even my laſt will, which I leave to you, which is the one half of this book's tittle. O! know that it is no burdenſome nor grievous command, but it is your life, my dear children. O! follow and obey the will of the dead: For ſo this will be, e're it come to your hands. I have ſuch earneſtneſs of heart, and benſil of ſoul for you, in this your ſo great concernment, that you need not think it ſtrange, if I make repetitions; and ſo much the rather this may be, that I very ſeldom read what I have formerly written. The firſt part of the tittle, is GOD'S FREE MERCIES TO ME, which I know ſhall be recorded in heaven amongſt the everlaſting monuments of his goodneſs. But I deſire to ſet down here under mine own hand,

to you my children, some few of these his mercies, which I cannot number: that you may praise him, on my behalf on earth, when I shall be praising him above after a more full manner, than now I can: As also, that you may be encouraged to serve the GOD of your father. To every one of you that endeavoureth to do this, I HEARTILY LEAVE YOU MY BLESSING. But, if any of you shall be so mad, as not to seek after GOD, to such I have no blessing at all to leave; for how can I bless these, whom GOD doth not bless? For tho' you should have the fatness of this earth, yet I count that no blessing, unless the favour of GOD be with it; which doth make poverty, afflictions, crosses, and even all things blessings. Blessed be HE, who is the fountain of all mercies, for ever.

SECT. XLII. JANUARY 6th 1666.

UPON Tuesday last, betwixt 11 and 12 of the night, when I was lying down, but not fallen asleep, I was suddenly raised with a cry of fire, which in a very short time burnt a house over against this, where now I am, and have been since, the 22d. of September last. A little before the fire, the wind arose very strong, and continued so all the time, and blowing straight upon the house, did endanger it more than any other, especially my chamber, upon which the fire did sometimes so take, that it was a sort of wonder it was preserved; which token of the goodness of my GOD, I desire to keep recorded in my heart, and to insert here. This family, by taking in my fellow prisoner and me, did get the ill will of some; by which,

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since my entry in to it, I did think myself the more concerned to pray that their labour of love might be rewarded; and not only so, but I also judge it to be my duty, to seek the good and welfare of this city, and country, the land of my captivity, both while I am detain'd amongst them, which I know not how long it may be, as also if I were removed from them. It were my part to wish them well, who have shown so much love to me a banish'd stranger; tho' I count it the goodness of GOD, that giveth me favour in the sight of those, among whom I am cast: This hath been his usual way, and I set to my witness and seal to this truth, that he changeth not. He hath been, is now, and to the end of time will be, with all his, in the furnace of affliction. If any enquire, when is GOD nearest to his people, or to any one of them in particular? It may be answered, even then, when they are most in trouble; when waves and billows are going over them, he will not let them sink; he can preserve alive under the waters. If the most intelligent of men had seen Jonah cast overboard, into the midst of the tempestuous seas, within less than an hour thereafter, they could not but have concluded him dead. O! it is safe and true wisdom, not only to let much time pass over, but even the end of time come, before we have any harsh thoughts of his dealings; for in the close of his perfect work, we shall acknowledge that all his ways "have been mercy and truth, to them that love "and fear him;" and that nothing of all that hath been done, might have been wanted, for he doth nothing in vain, and "without him a hair can-"not fall from the heads of any of his servants." This is not above our faith: for when ever we know

know his infinite power, and goodneſs, we will then acknowledge, that his gracious providence doth reach to the ſmalleſt of our concernments; and if to the ſmalleſt, then certainly to the greateſt; therefore ſhould we "be careful for nothing, but "in every thing make our neceſſities known to him "by prayer, with thankſgiving." O that I and you, my children, may ſo do! I muſt return to what I would further ſay of our delivery from the fire, upon Tueſday's night laſt; This houſe was gone in the eſteem of all the beholders; and tho' I did ſee no outward appearance of its ſafety, yet I had all the time, ſcarce any fear, but did truſt in GOD, that he would be graciouſly pleaſed to deliver it; for which I did ſend up ſhort and haſty prayers to him, like theſe who cried to the LORD, 2 Chron. xiii. 14. which have been ſent up in haſte, and, as 'tis like, with ſome confuſion. This was the firſt ſcripture, which I providentially read, after the fire. As the LORD heard them; ſo he did poor unworthy me, and granted the broken, confuſed, and haſty ſuits, which I did put up to him; for all the time I was buſy in uſing the means; yet it was not theſe, but his free grace and mercy that preſerved this houſe, which I eſteem more of, than ten times the worth of the houſe, for many reſpects, which I will not here inſert: there was alſo ſome thing obſervable in the houſe that was burnt, which is not fit for me to ſet down in writing, only I inſert this much, becauſe I am ready, oh too ready! to forget his mercies, and likewiſe to ſhow that "he is the hearer of prayers, and doth "love them that love him;" and not only ſo, but alſo doth good to theſe who ſhew any favour to his people, when they are low in the eſteem of the world;

world; he will not let "a cup of cold water, given to "a disciple in the name of a disciple, pass unreward-"ed." O! how many encouragements are there for to serve him? Glory, glory to him for ever more. O! let all the angels, and the saints above, and in this lower world say, Amen.

SECT. XLIII. JANUARY 31st 1666.

I FIND that a conscientious remembring of one mercy maketh way for the receiving of another; for, since my last writing here, I received a letter from my dearly beloved wife, shewing that she trusteth there is a good work begun in our son Robert. This is amongst the gladest news that could have come to me. In comparison of this, what a small thing is it to be raised up to rule over a nation, or kingdom in the earth? Where are they who did once stile themselves kings of kings? could their dust be now known, from the dust of the poorest that lived in the world with them? Some of them would be esteemed gods when they were gone, and for this end did cause hide their bodies, when dead, that the people might think they were gone up into heaven: they had good cause so to do; for, if their dead corps had been seen, it would have well appeared, what filthy idols they were. VANITY OF VANITIES, is written upon all momentary things: But a work of grace in the heart, a grain of the seed of life cast in by the hand of GOD, this is of inestimable worth, a glorious work begun, that shall never have an end. I believe, that it is thus with my son; and, I trust that he who hath begun that good work will perfect

fect it. The little that I hear, I am bound to take as the anſwer of the many prayers, which I have put up: many times do I, when alone, name all your ſeven names before GOD, begging the ſalvation of your ſouls, and that your days upon the earth may not be ſpent in following vanities, but in ſerving the LORD; tho' I ſhould not within time get the anſwer of my deſires, yet I think it my duty to go down to my grave in the hope of this, that GOD, of his rich free grace, will do you, my children, good. Bleſſed be he, who, knowing my weakneſs, doth think fit to give me in part the anſwer of my prayers, to encourage me to aſk more, and that in faith, when I find him giving: and likewiſe to comfort me now, when under the croſs, he beſtoweth on me the hundredth fold, which is promiſed with perſecution, and with the forſaking of any thing for him. O! how abundantly will my ſhort ſeparation from you, my ſon, be made up, if I get you to be with me in everlaſting joys; into which we ſhall enter, if we endure to the end, within a few years at moſt. I dare not now, when ſuffering for my LORD and Maſter, think my time long, leſt I ſhould weary of his croſs. I verily believe, that if I were taken up to ſee the KING in his beauty, and the happy eſtate of the ſaints above, if then it were aſked at me, Whether wilt thou preſently enter into theſe pleaſures, or go down to the earth, and do thy LORD ſervice, in filling up what is remaining of his afflictions in thy fleſh yea, I am perſwaded, that I would deny myſelf, and anſwer, I will go and bear his croſs, tho' it were for a thouſand years; for O! what will they not endure, "who ſee him that is "inviſible?" But Oh my leanneſs, and barrenneſs!

eſpecially my ſhort-comings in praiſing him, and edifying others by my walk and diſcourſe, as occaſion ſerves, and in reproving evil doers for their unfruitful works of darkneſs! when I think on theſe my many and great failings, I muſt then ſay, O to be gone to that place, where no ſin is! I have nothing to uphold me under the ſenſe of mine infirmities, but the thoughts of this, that the free grace of my GOD ſhall ſhine ſo much the more thro' all eternity. O! I deſire to be well content to be nothing, that he may be all. My ſon, I have thus inſerted GOD's goodneſs to you, and to me, that you may be encouraged to hold on your way, which is the way of life: and if at any time you fall ſlack, or thro' weakneſs, and the power of temptations be turned aſide, O then remember your firſt love, and haſten to do your firſt work. This I ſay to you, and to all the reſt of my children, "Love GOD, and keep his commandments, which "are not grievous;" ſo ſhall you fulfil my joy. O that ſo it may be.

SECT. XLIV. FEBRUARY 5th 1666.

GOD hath been glorified by the ſufferings of ſome of his, who have been ſhut up in priſons, and cut off as martyrs, they not being known to be ſo, by any in the world, as that any one ſoul hath been better'd by them, or by their ſufferings; yet ſhall theſe ſhine with them of the firſt rank in glory. And certainly Paul would have chearfully endured all the afflictions which he ſuffered for the truth, altho' he ſhould not have ſeen the furtherance of the goſpel, and any brethren ſtrengthed by

by his bonds, as is mentioned Philip. 1ſt chap. GOD, of his goodneſs, doth give his ſuffering ſervants to ſee ſome of the fruit of their labour, to encourage them the more under the croſs; as alſo he maketh the perſecuting of his people tend to the furthering of his work, for to diſappoint his enemies, whom he doth take in their own ſnares, and confounding their wiſdom, bringeth the contrary good out of their wicked devices, ſo that all their plottings, and actings, tend to the glory of his great name, the advantage of his work, and to the good of his people, eſpecially to the joy and comfort of theſe whom he honoureth, and upon whom he doth beſtow the gift, "to ſuffer for his ſake." If the SPIRIT of truth had not told us, that our King is graciouſly pleaſed to allow our poor empty ſuffering to be for his ſake, we could never have believed it to be ſo. I find it is ſeeming humility, but true pride, not to take all his allowances freely: he is the LORD of all, and great gifts do very well become his GREATNESS to give, and our emptineſs to receive. I deſire hereafter never to refuſe what he freely offereth, yea I can no way glorify him ſo much, as in taking from him, and believing his word, and receiving his promiſes, tho' conveyed by never ſo weak an inſtrument; as, upon Friday laſt, one whom I was labouring to ſtrengthen in the faith, was made inſtrumental to ſtrengthen me under my ſufferings, by telling me, that when they were earneſtly minding my condition before the LORD, it was given them, as the anſwer, be not troubled for him, for he is one of theſe, of whom it ſhall be ſaid, "Theſe are they, which came out "of great tribulation, and have waſhed their "robes, and made them white in the Blood of the

" LAMB." The tempter is ready to object, that my tribulations are not great, and therefore this is not applicable to me; but since GOD is pleased to count them great, who doth account of things that are not, as tho' they were, I believe his word, and will give glory to his free grace, and give Satan the lie. Thus shall his temptations be frustrate, and I shall become stronger, thro' him who strengthneth me. This strengthning word was brought to me by one, who saith, they have got good by poor empty me, since I came hither: which I insert not to boast of (GOD is my witness) but that he may get praise; for why should I conceal his goodness? When at first I got my sentence to come hither, it was much upon my heart, and hath ever since been so, that the LORD would make me instrumental for the good of others, and that he would be pleased to bring some good out of my small sufferings: which I thought, I was bound to believe, should assuredly be, though I should not see it within time. But glory to him, who is graciously pleased to let me see that my coming here is not in vain, but for the advantage of some here, and elsewhere. This is his hundred fold, which he giveth me, with persecution in this life. He knoweth my weakness is such, as that I need such encouragements to help me under the cross, on in my way: but O that I may ever lean to himself alone, and not to any of these props, which, when lean'd to, will but prove broken reeds, the splinters whereof will hurt the hands! My children, thus do I mention the goodness of my GOD to me, that you may be encouraged to seek and serve the GOD of your father, who can provide food for you, even in a wilderness, and make you to rejoice under the sharpest sufferings for

for righteousness. I will leave at this my true witness, that I cannot enough commend the cross of JESUS CHRIST, even the joy and peace which it bringeth in this life, to them who willingly walk under it.

SECT. XLV. Greenknow, MARCH 10th 1666.

UPON the 6th day of February, my friends, by their affectionate pains, without my knowledge, did procure from the high commission the change of my confinement from Elgin to mine own house, and three miles about, for the payment of 200 L. Sterling, and bond by Stitchill and Tersons, for my peaceable and inoffensive behaviour. This word, INOFFENSIVE did stumble me; but if I offend not my GOD, I need not value the groundless offences which men take against me. The order came to my hand upon the 20th day of February; and I came from Elgin on the 23d, and to this place on Tuesday last, the 6th of March. I had no cause of wearying of my last condition, for abundantly did I find my LORD and Master's promise, Ezek. xi. 16. fulfilled to me. Many times I have thought, that afterwards I should remember on that time, which I had at Elgin, as one of the sweetest times which I have had in my lifetime; yea it may be, the thoughts of GOD's goodness to me there shall be food to my soul the remainder of my days. Often have I walked, in the closs walk of the chancellor's garden, two hours, or more; all the time being wholly taken up, and spent in praying, meditating, worshipping, and praising. The last winter my usual walk was down the water side

of Loſſie, below the town, which was ſo ſolitary, that I was never twice interrupted by rencountering of any. Thus the recreating of my body was no diſturbance to my ſpirit. I had never better health, and ſo few fears and anxious cares, as the year paſt, and ſo full a feeling of the ſufferings of the people of GOD, and of his born down intereſts; as alſo I had more favour in the eyes of theſe among whom I was caſt, than ever I could have expected. And not only did the unexpreſſible goodneſs of my GOD abound toward me in my baniſhment; but the ſame goodneſs did alſo attend my family at home all that time; for all which I have cauſe for ever to praiſe the name of my GOD. And now I have nothing, but hope in his free grace, who changeth not, to uphold me under the fears I have, that it may not go ſo well with me, when I am in the midſt of my family and friends. My ſnares and troubles are like to be more, and temptations ſtronger; neither am I ſo fully within the prayers of the LORD's people, not being ſo great a ſufferer, as when baniſhed; as alſo the ſoul ſeldom or never thriveth ſo under proſperity, as it doth in time of adverſity, eſpecially when ſufferings are for righteouſneſs ſake. The LORD is ever near to his in time of trouble, as a preſent helper to them: and any poor weak creature, ſuch as I am, can walk chearfully under the heavieſt croſs, when he helpeth them, who never leaveth his own in the furnace: but the ſtrongeſt of the ſaints cannot well bear a proſperous ſtate; ſo that, for this and many other reſpects, I have now much cauſe to ſpend more time in prayer, and to be more watchful than formerly. And yet, O! it is like, I ſhall have leſs time to ſpend in theſe holy exerciſes, becauſe

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that my worldly employments are now increaſed; O for grace to ſerve my GOD in theſe! and O that I may now more than ever mind the afflictions of his people, and may ever with fear poſſeſs mine enjoyments, when I remember theſe (far more worthy than I) who have not the like liberty. O that their inward conſolations may always abound to them, from the GOD of their ſalvation! and O that I may ever have more of a fellow-feeling of their ſufferings, than barely to ſay, be ye comforted, be ye clothed, be ye fed! Of myſelf I can do nothing that is good; O that he, who hath brought me from the womb hitherto, may help me to do every good work, to the praiſe of his rich free grace: My GOD, leave me not when I am old, and gray hair'd. O that the remainder of my days in the earth may be a fruitful and flouriſhing time to me; and that in my generation, I may be for the good of the ſouls of others! Bleſſed be my GOD, who helped me, ſo to be, in the North: and now the number of theſe to whom I may daily ſpeak in this houſe is increaſed: O for a large meaſure of his holy quickning SPIRIT, and that I may make mention of his moſt excellent name, as becometh; and that we of this family, and all theſe whom I have left in the North, whom I deſire always to remember, and his ſervants every where, I ſay, O that we may all worſhip GOD in the ſpirit, and rejoice in CHRIST JESUS, and have no confidence in the fleſh! According to my yeſternight's ordinary, Philip. iii. 3. I have often thought, I would labour to inſtruct and exhort my children and family more carefully than formerly, if I ſhould be reſtored to them (as now I am.) But all my good reſolutions will prove but as the miſcarrying womb, and ſeed which never taketh life, unleſs GOD, who quickneth the

the dead, give life, and bring to perfection: therefore are mine eyes toward him, waiting for his supplying of all my wants, who will never disappoint those that put their trust in him. My children, believe in him evermore.

A LETTER written to the House of GREENKNOW, by the Author of the foregoing MEMOIRS.

MY FRIENDS,

ALTHO' by violence I am put from you, yet a necessity of caring for you is upon me. I see these cares, that are only for the things of this life, are but of very small concernment: therefore my very earnest desire for all of you is, that you may diligently seek after the knowledge of GOD thro' JESUS CHRIST, whom to know is life eternal; that so you may have your treasure in heaven, where moth and rust entereth not, and where thief and robber cannot come. Oh! what a poor life is it, for one to take pleasure in nothing, but that which is continually in the power of devils and men! Thus it is with all these who have not their life hid with CHRIST in GOD. Make your peace with him, while yet you are upon your way, and get him upon your side, then you need not care for all that can be against you: Your enemies are many, and these are the most dangerous which strive to keep you secure in that deep sleep, the end of which will be everlasting torment, if in time you awake not. These of you who never had a true change wrought upon your hearts, alas! you see not the danger you are in, nor the terrible wrath that is hanging over your heads, that may

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fall upon you, and deſtroy you for ever, ſome night when you ly down, before your eyes open in the morning. I ſee the hazard ſuch are in, and the longings I have after your good do preſs me to warn you, to come out of your falſe peace, that you may partake of that peace which paſſeth all natural underſtanding, which the LORD JESUS giveth to every one that aſketh from him. O that you may be built upon him, who is the rock of ages, that your building may not be ſhaken, when the winds blow, and the ſtorms ariſe, which will ruin every one, that is not founded upon the chief corner ſtone, which is diſallowed by the fooliſh builders of this world, but is precious to them that believe! You ſhall never fully know his worth and excellency: When once you receive him, your greateſt grief will be, that you ſhould have lived ſo long time without him; then will you love him more for himſelf, than for the ſalvation which he will give you. So long as you ſtay at a diſtance from him, you will think in your minds, that theſe things are but fables; but receive the truth into your hearts, and then you ſhall acknowledge, that the thouſandth part hath not, yea cannot be told you; and then you ſhall not only be content to be happy yourſelves alone, but ſhall preſs others alſo, to take a ſhare with you, telling them what the LORD hath done for your ſouls. O that Chriſtians were thus pointing out the way one to another now, when the faithful guides are removed into corners, and the blind are left to lead the blind! I pray that the great ſhepherd of ſouls may lead you, and feed you, and keep you from being driven away from himſelf in this ſtormy day. I truſt that my abſence from you ſhall not be to your loſs, but for your ſoul's advantage: if my ſufferings be,

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thro' GOD's goodneſs, made a mean of doing good to one of the leaſt amongſt you, I ſhall count myſelf a very great gainer. The ſearcher of hearts knoweth that the welfare of your ſouls is dearer to me than all mine enjoyments in this world are; tho' I cannot as yet ſay, with the apoſtle, that I would be content to be ſeparate from the LORD JESUS for you; and yet truly I am content to remain baniſhed from you, and from my wife and children, if I may profit you by theſe my bonds, even tho' they ſhould continue upon me the few days I have to live in this world. Your ſpiritual advantage was that motive inclining me to undergo this ſentence, even next to GOD's glory, and the ſalvation of mine own ſoul; for I knew, that if once I ſhould ſwear falſly, then my words ſhould ſcarce ever have place with you; yea, I ſhould have been as a tree blown up by the roots and withered, cumbering the ground, and fit for nothing but burning. Bleſſed be my GOD, who hath preſerved me from being a ſtumbling block to any of you, and hath kept me from contradicting, by my practice, theſe truths which I endeavoured, tho' in great weakneſs, to hold forth to you; the ſum of which is this, that they, and they only are fit to be CHRIST's diſciples, who are willing to part with every ſin, and when called to it, as now I am, with every enjoyment for him. O! He is well worth ten thouſand times more than all we can do and ſuffer for him; who hath no need of us, or of our ſervice; only, he is graciouſly pleaſed to allow us to be happy, in ſerving and enjoying him, who is the prince of the kings of the earth, and chief of all the thouſands in heaven and earth: He is altogether lovely; he is the heaven of his ſaints, and it will be their life, and unexpreſſible joy, to behold his glorious excellency

lency in eternity. These whose hearts and tongues have been most enlarged to meditate upon, and to express his infinite worth, will wonder, when they shall see him as he is, that they should have had such slender thoughts of him; the souls that are enlightned with the knowledge of him will be so far from being afraid of men, that they will be ready to say to enemies, Devise ye the forest of torments, and we will chearfully go thro' them for his Name's sake. If any of you say in your hearts, can these things be? the best answer that I can give you is, Come and see. I know that in any other thing you would trust my word: O! believe me in this, and you shall find that 'tis good to draw near unto GOD, and that whatever the ignorant world say, there is a reward for the righteous, even an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. And what are their present afflictions and crosses? but as a little shower of rain, which will make them find their fair palace and mansion the more heartsome when they enter into it. Neither is all delay'd until we come there, for I may bear witness unto this truth, that some, even in their sharpest trials, find more sweetness in the blinks of his gracious loving countenance, than in all the pleasures which this world can afford. And now, since the least allowance our LORD giveth to his own, is far beyond the best things which the worldlings have a moment's enjoyment of; therefore, O my dear friends, embrace him for your Lord and Master. And you who have hitherto lived without him, delay no longer, but set to with all your might, to enquire after him, who is not far from every one of you. And now, when there are few watchmen left, but such as will smite and wound you, ask the daughters of Jerusalem, your neighbours; who in some measure know him, and

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enjoy him, where their beloved is. Bleſſed be GOD, there are ſome in the family, who may direct the reſt in the way that leadeth to him; and it is his allowance to you all, that you ſhould aſk at himſelf, where he feedeth, and maketh his flocks to reſt at noon? Live as ſtrangers and pilgrims on this earth, and ſo declare plainly, that you ſeek a country, and look for a city which hath foundations, whoſe builder and maker is GOD. If you be prevailed with to follow on to know the LORD, and be able to ſay in truth, that you have none in heaven but him, and that there is none upon the earth that you deſire beſides him, then have I the anſwer of this, and of my prayers for you; and you ſhall refreſh me in my chains, and I ſhall joyfully praiſe GOD on your behalf. When there is little of GOD to be ſeen or felt in moſt of the congregations, eſteem the more of your aſſembling to worſhip him in the family. Think not the leſs of that exerciſe, that it is performed by a woman: I have often thought that you would have no loſs by my abſence, ſo long as you have her to worſhip GOD in the family with you. The apoſtles themſelves gladly received from women the news of our LORD's reſurrection from the dead, as you may find Matth xxviii. Luke xxiv. John xx. "The GOD "of peace, that brought again from the dead "our LORD JESUS, make you perfect in every "good work, to do his will, working in you "that which is well pleaſing in his ſight." My love be with all in CHRIST JESUS: be of good comfort; you who hope for our LORD's coming rejoice, and again rejoice, for he will come, and will not tarry: live in this faith. Farewell.

Elgin, Novem. 21ſt 1665. Sic ſubſcrib. WAL. PRINGLE.

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